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# Model Railroad News

The All-Scale News Monthly

**Broadway Limited's affordably priced  
HO-scale brass hybrid raises the bar**

Volume 15, Issue 3 • March 2009

\$4.95 US/CANADA



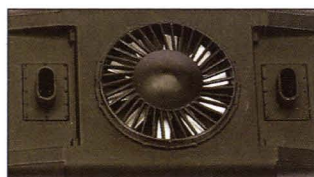
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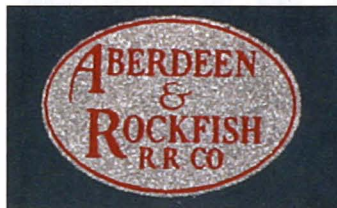
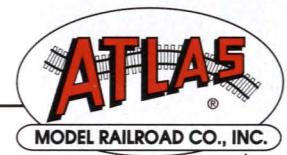
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# Rejuvenate your Layout

## **N** New Power for the Milwaukee Road

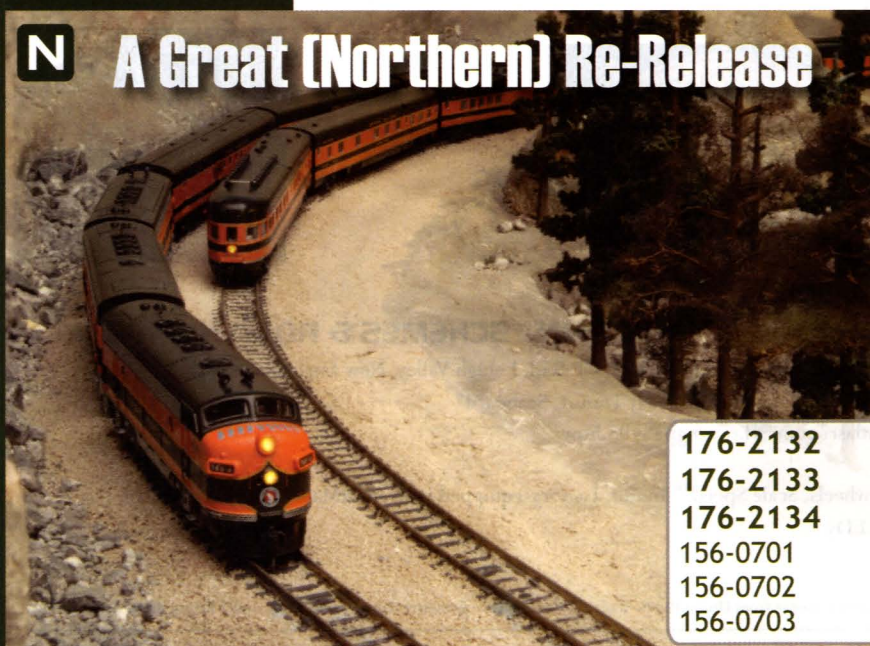


### EMD NW2 MILWAUKEE ROAD

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|                 |                                          |      |
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1:29 Scale 1 1 1 SOUND INCLUDED 12 1/2" TRACK DIAMETER 5"min



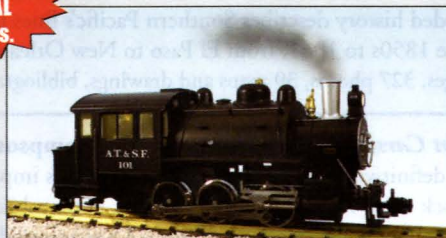
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METAL  
10 lbs.**

Virginia & Truckee Overton Passenger Car Set



R20051 D&RGW®



R20052 Santa Fe



R20053 Union Pacific®



R20054 Southern Pacific®



R20056 Pennsylvania



R20058 Baltimore & Ohio



R20063 Bethlehem Steel

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R14209 Bethlehem Steel Ore Cars



R20060 Colorado & Southern



R20062 Colorado Mining Company



R20065 Canadian Pacific



R20066 Canadian National



R20069 Great Northern



R-0004



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#### *Sacramento Northern*, Harre W. Demoro

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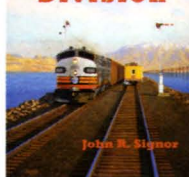
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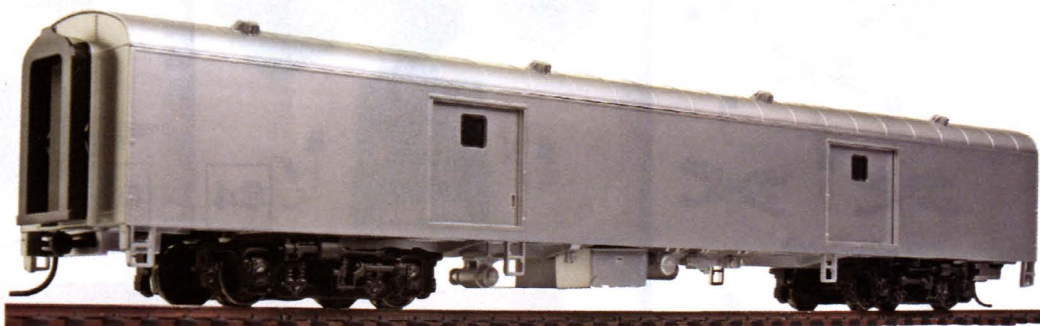
**NEW**  
ROADNUMBERS



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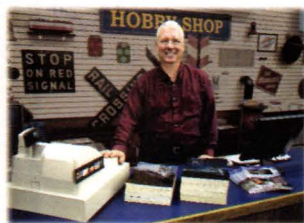
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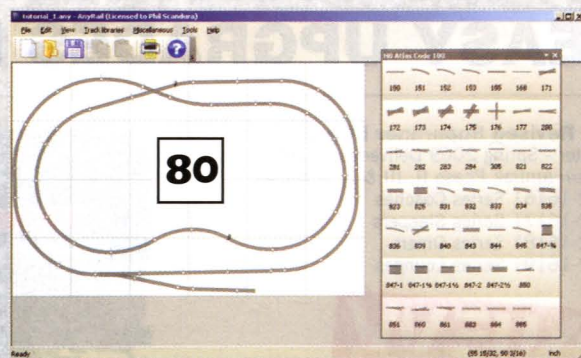
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# The Train List

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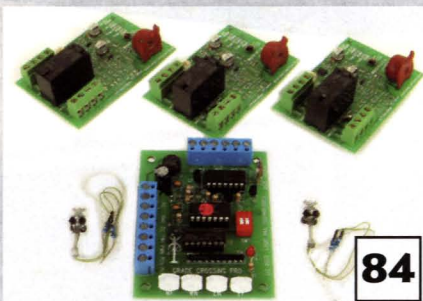
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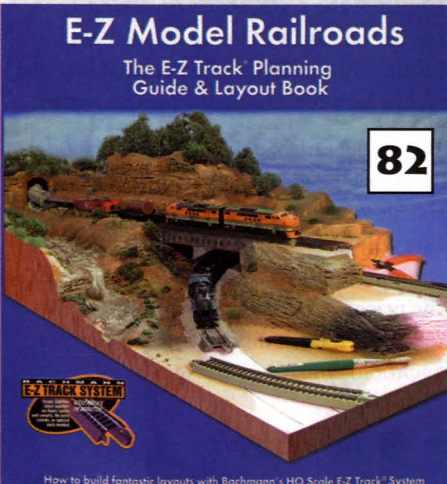
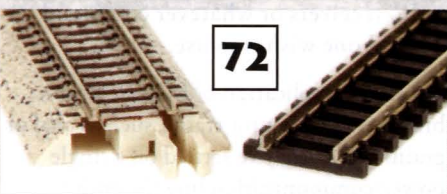
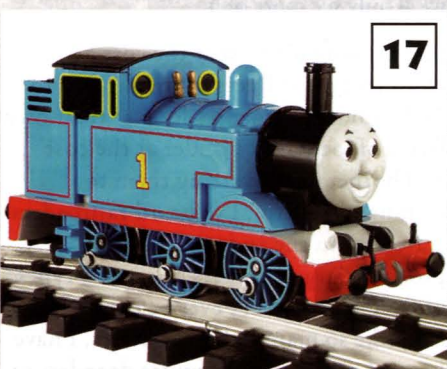


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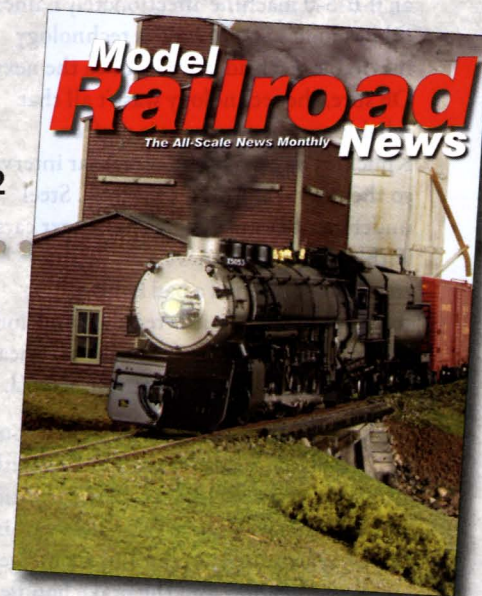
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**About The Cover:** Late in her career, Union Pacific 2-10-2 number 5053 works a local freight on the Nebraska Division. Broadway Limited Imports' new TTT-6/7 model represents a relatively new medium for modeling known as a brass-hybrid. It displays the quality of a full brass model at the fraction of the cost. — Photo by David Otte





Arthur C. Clarke, the great science fiction writer, said, "Any technology, sufficiently advanced, is indistinguishable from magic." As we watch kids navigate around their cell phones while their parents struggle to dial a call, there seems to be a lot of truth in this. That leads to one of my favorite sayings, "Technology is inevitable." But over time, every technology loses its magic as it becomes routine.

In 1893, the Railroad Safety Appliance Act mandated a number of technologies to railroads. Among them were knuckle couplers, air brakes, telegraph dispatching, and steel underframes for cars. Most of these technologies had been around for a while, but relying on them to improve safety and establish operating standards gave it all a new spin.

Technology is inevitable, and in 1904, eleven years after the act was passed and just four years after its mandatory implementation, the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad bought a new piece of technology that worked with knuckle couplers, air brakes, and steel underframes to deliver greater productivity. All the brakemen were off the top of the cars, since the brakes were now applied from the locomotive cab, and the steel frames and knuckle couplers let railroads build longer trains. But when it came to hilly grades, they needed extra motive power on the back to help push these bigger trains.

The new technology on the B&O was the first articulated Mallet steam locomotive, an 0-6-6-0 machine affectionately named "Old Maude." So not only is technology inevitable, each advance leads to the next. Oh sure, the technology wasn't all that reliable at times, nor was it perfect. Knuckle couplers broke at regular intervals, so they were improved over time. Steel underframes were fine but passenger cars with steel underframes and wooden superstructures had a bad habit of "telescoping" in a train wreck, a condition where one car would go into the car ahead and so on, killing many of those aboard.

Air brakes had their problems, too. Many were resolved, but we're still dealing with air brake issues to this day. In the eighties and nineties, we've seen long, heavy trains run away because the trainline would get crimped somehow and the brake handle in

the cab could only set perhaps a third of them. Technology then supplied the FRED — Flashing Rear End Device. In addition to the red safety light, this also provided a mechanism for the cab to vent the brake line from the back.

One problem with train air brakes that has been hardest to handle is the sequential set and release of the brakes in a long train. In addition to the six inches of slack in each pair of conjoined couplers, there is a "daisy-chain" delay in brake application. When you set the train brakes, the first car brakes almost instantaneously. Not quite so fast is the second car, the third car lags after the second and so on, the length of the train.

Railroaders used this brake lag to start trains. A really clever engineer would set the brake valve for a slow release and then put on the power. If he timed it right, the pull would come onto each car about as its brakes released, letting him start a train he'd never get moving otherwise. The hogger would back into the slack, and then run out the slack to get the whole train moving. That, however, was just about the only good thing about brake lag.

When it comes time for an emergency brake application, the slack in the cars can run in so fast that they break couplers and damage the equipment. Meanwhile, the stopping distance is immense because it takes a while until all the brakes are applied.

Technology is inevitable, and so here comes the Electro-Pneumatic Brake System — ECP. Each car in the train is fitted with a remote-controlled valve that applies the brakes on that car immediately. When all the cars on the train have these remote-controlled valves, one signal from the cab sets them all, instantly. Once reliability factors have been settled, the list of advantages are impressive.

First, ECP systems will get a train stopped faster, and the longer the train, the better it works. Graduated application and release would be implemented, and that would allow car reservoirs to be recharged even during gradual braking. This also sets the stage for continuous monitoring of every car's braking system in the train. Retainer and empty/load valves would not be required.

Terminal delays would be reduced because

it wouldn't be necessary to perform the time-consuming brake system check. The brake system computer monitor in the cab would indicate the entire system's status and the existence of cars with defects. Braking forces would be uniform, reducing the wear and tear on individual brake components. The Association of American Railroads is currently testing all of this. If this technology pans out, it could make some huge changes not only in safety but also the operation of trains.

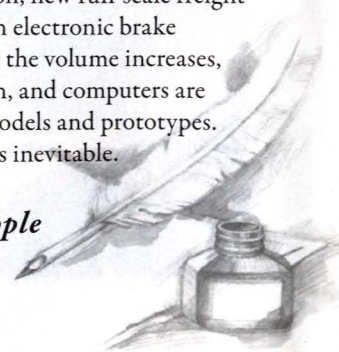
Model railroading has also undergone some technological changes. From the simple and yet stifling process of controlling model trains by altering the power in the rails, we are now offered several technologies that control the locomotive from inside of it. After over a century of electric trains, we now have various forms of command control. This has opened a Pandora's Box of possibilities, meaning we'll only see more of it.

Just as railroads look at the cost of converting vast fleets of freight cars to ECP, model railroaders look at their own fleets of locos and wonder at the cost and bother of converting them to command control. I've heard railroaders state that in the endgame of ECP, probably large numbers of certain types of freight cars won't ever be converted. And like so many other modelers, I have locos that will never acquire decoders or radio receivers or whatever command control one wishes to use.

The initial application of ECP electronic brakes will be in unit trains, such as coal or grain. While they've settled on a single power/communication line the entire length of the train, issues involving connectors are still being worked out. Model railroading hasn't declared just one technology for command control, either.

The model railroad industry offers model locomotives with decoders installed from the factory, and soon, new full-scale freight cars will arrive with electronic brake equipment, too. As the volume increases, the price goes down, and computers are involved in both models and prototypes. Technology really is inevitable.

— *By John Sipple*







## 3800 Horses on Your HO Line

Chug it around your modern HO layout, or display it in your home or office as a patriotic symbol. Genesis celebrates those who fought in Operation Desert Storm with a commemorative SD60M locomotive that ranks with the industry's best. Made using state-of-the-art tooling, the vibrant red, white, and blue model comes fully assembled.

It's just one of many new SD60M and SD60I models now available from Genesis at a hobby store near you. Attention to detail is a Genesis

hallmark, and these are no exception with plenty of injection-molded, die-cast, lost wax casting, and photo-etched parts.

In addition, these wide-nose SD60s come with or without a dual-function DC/DCC decoder/soundboard with original sounds recorded specifically for this model. Genesis' high-tech sound and lighting functions continue to help set the industry standard. Stop by your local Genesis dealer today to pick up an SD60 that fits your personality.

### SD60M/I

SD60M BN #1991 Desert Storm  
SD60M BNSF Heritage II #9263  
SD60M BNSF Heritage II #9275  
SD60M BNSF Heritage II #9290  
SD60M Norfolk Southern #6778  
SD60M Norfolk Southern #6789

G67263/G67363  
G67264/G67364  
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G67266/G67366  
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G67267/G67367  
G67271/G67371  
G67272/G67372  
G67273/G67373





# Fresh From The RPO Car

## DCC issues

I pretty much agree with your current editorial [criticizing] BNSF for quibbling about pennies. But I want to point out that in the same issue, on page 18, there's mention of Sanda Kan's annual sales of \$93M. The model railroading 57 percent of that comes to about \$53M. If even half of that came from BNSF & UP and their legatees, their 1 percent "commission" would come to around a quarter of a million dollars, probably worth their effort to try to collect. Most of the rest of the model RR industry is pretty small potatoes.

Now for my question: Could the railroads charge a "commission" on any photos that show their brands? That would put quite a crimp in most rail magazines, wouldn't it?

Keep up the good work.

**Ralph Hueston Kratz**  
Richmond, CA

*Two good issues to raise, Ralph. That \$53 million is world-wide sales, and only the portion that goes to the United States is subject to the "BNSF Tax." Since they can't go directly to Sanda Kan, which does not operate in US jurisdiction, they have to discover all of the various importers, badger them individually, and — as UP discovered — get only a fraction of what they consider to be their due. The BNSF roadnames won't reflect half; being more like ten percent, plus UP is no longer the issue. In the end, they'll probably spend far more than they'll ever collect.*

*As to the issue of photographs, the Supreme Court and the lower courts are largely in agreement, and thanks to paparazzi, we have a standard. If rich celebrities could have claimed their faces in the photos, believe me, they would! The courts have consistently held that the photograph belongs to the photographer — period. Photographs have copyrights automatically, and being an extension of the First Amendment, copyrights prevail over trademarks.*

*Meanwhile, magazines are right in the middle of the First Amendment, and we can pretty much publish what we wish so long as it isn't libelous. —John*

I have been a subscriber for some time now, and I like your new format, but this is the first time I've a bone to pick. I've been a NYC HO modeler for over 50 years. In fact I fired Mohawks on the Hudson Division in the 50s. Most of my fellow modelers, except those who belong to clubs are analog, not DCC. I myself have over 50+ locos and am not about to change. My complaint is that you gloss over the fact that in analog operation the 12 VDC that analog power packs supply is not enough to run these locos at scale 60 to 80 MPH. How many have 16 VDC power supplies? That could do damage to the electrical systems.

This was covered on page 89 in the December 2008 issue of *Model Railroader*. Why didn't you? Unless I get an answer to this question, I'll not renew my subscription.

I have the same problem with an early BLI Hudson, but a buddy that bought a later version ran it fine on my layout.

**Tom Tully**  
Folsom, CA

*Hi, Tom. You need to understand a couple of things up front. First, we don't run a "follow-the-leader" mentality regarding what other magazines publish. We are our own publishing company, and we march to our own drum. Second, as an editor, I am never persuaded or changed by threats of any sort, including subscription renewals. You never get a good publication if you let other folks run the City Desk.*

*We gloss over nothing and our By-The-Numbers has covered this since the beginning. In our By-The-Numbers series, the important numbers are all revealed. I won't connect the dots for you, letting you have the pleasure of making your own analysis.*

*As to your question regarding DC power packs, I have a ProTech from Polk's Hobby and a Bridgewater, distributed by Silvergate. The ProTech will give me DC up to 17 volts and the Bridgewater Mini-Mag puts out more like 24 volts. Both produce no AC leaked into the supply, providing the pure current DC should be. I haven't covered the entire power market, but we have a number of brands and models around here. Even my train set power*

*packs will cook up around 13.6, which non-coincidentally is the same as automotive accessory voltage. I always use a volt/ohmmeter to tell me what my voltage is at all times.*

*The other issue is huge. Any locomotive with a DCC-compliant decoder built-in is designed to be run on full small-scale DCC power, generally around 15 to 16 volts AC. Like it or not, the DC side requires sufficient power to get it going, and so it takes most of ten or more volts to start them under DC. If a loco doesn't start until it receives 10 volts (a very common number), 13 is the maximum DC voltage of most power controllers, and 16 represents top voltage for the decoder, then my By-The-Numbers data will typically give you 10-13-16 as voltage samples. Drop by the TAMR column this month. Steven breaks into DCC and shares his experiences. —John*

## Issues with MTH locomotives

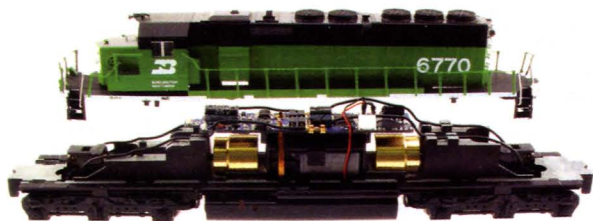
After reading David Otte's review of the Mohawk in the January issue, plus the reviews of other MTH locomotives in your and other magazines, I have come to the conclusion that MTH makes accurately scaled, exquisitely detailed toy locos that are not designed for the serious DC or DCC modeler. Why? Let me list the reasons.

1. All their HO locos have a non-conforming 24v motor which does not give a reasonable top speed at 12v DC. The Mohawk chart shows 16.2 scale MPH. DC voltages over 12v are risky on a normal DC layout since inadvertent assignment of 14 or 15v to a block with other locos could create havoc in crashes and burned out lights.
2. No ability to shorten the tender drawbar for realistic spacing on a layout with broad curves.
3. White smoke? Coal-burning locos gave off black smoke, sometimes mild and sometimes in furious billows. But not white. No realism to that. And what does the smoke residue do to track cleanliness and scenery? A useless feature for an operator looking for prototypic effects.
4. Cheap, poor-quality couplers for such an expensive locomotive. Not built at all for even moderate operation.



**0001802 HO Scale Drop-in sound decoder for Kato SD40-2**

**FEATURES** 2 Prime Mover Sounds, 16 horns, 8 bells



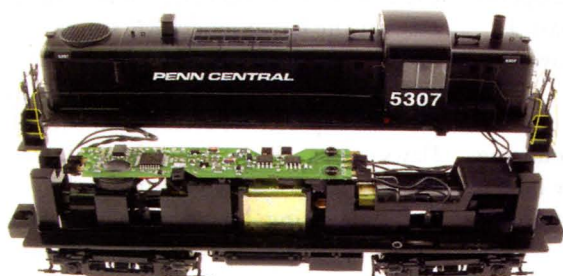
**0001803 HO Scale Drop-in sound decoder for Life-Like PA/PB**

**FEATURES** 4 Prime Mover Sounds, 34 horns, 8 bells



**0001820 HO Scale Drop-in sound decoder for Athearn (RTR) RS-3**

**FEATURES** 4 Prime Mover Sounds, 16 horns, 5 bells



**0001663 HO Scale Drop-in sound decoder for Atlas S2/S4**

**FEATURES** ALCO 244 Prime Mover Sound, 16 horns, 5 bells



**0001801 HO Scale Drop-in sound\* decoder fits many Atlas, Athearn, Life-Like, and Kato**

**FEATURES** 4 Prime Mover Sounds, 34 horns, 8 bells



**0001804 HO Scale Drop-in sound decoder for Athearn MP-15**

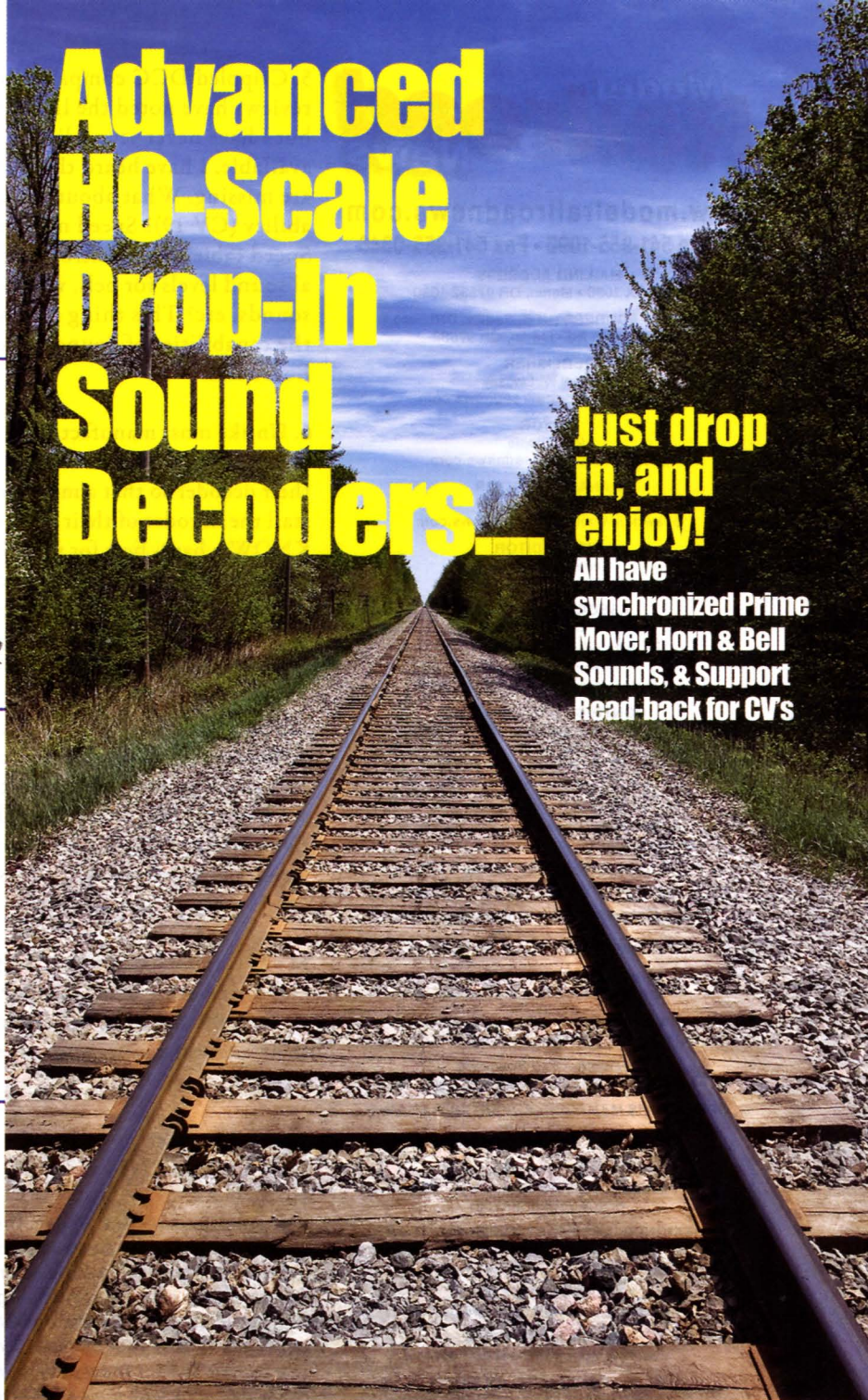
**FEATURES** 645E Prime Mover Sound, 13 horns, 6 bells



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5. Crippled DCC compatibility. Several reviews have noted the limit of 10 CVs, but I have never seen a list of those available. I have heard that CVs 5 and 6 are missing. What about consisting ability (CV 19)? Speed matching? Speed table? Full control over individual sound levels for bell, whistle, braking sounds, etc? This thing is nowhere near the capabilities of Soundtraxx, QSI, or Loksound.

6. Unlike most manufacturers, MTH does not sell their locomotives without their decoder so that a modeler can install the decoder of their choice. They KNOW what is best for you! Sheer hubris. And it's too bad, since as a modern modeler, I would be very interested in two or more remotored SD70ace diesels with no decoders on board.

The MTH toys do have a place in the hobby for those with smaller, basic layouts running only one or two trains. But the modeler with a more complex, operations-oriented layout will often pass. I wonder how many hobby shops have MTH stock gathering dust.

MTH claims that they will be producing and distributing many locomotive models in 2009. It will be interesting to see their sales experience as of next December.

**Roger Thomas**  
West Windsor, NJ

*Interesting perspective, Roger. That's why we try to avoid drawing conclusions in our reviews. Our writers have their own perspectives and may offer up opinions—good or not so much. You represent the operations side of the hobby, and your opinion is important to like-minded folks. I know people who are perfectly happy with their MTH locomotives.*

*I'm sure you could strip all of the electronics out of an MTH and install something else, knowing all the while you'll void your warranty. The smoker is easy to deactivate and couplers are simple to replace. Some see a model as a finished product, while others see it as a starting point. —John*

**Dave Otte's DCS review**

Your Oct '08 article "Can DCC Match the DCS slick?" stated that Dave Otte did a previous review of the MTH DCS Commander. I must have missed it — what issue was it in?

Now that I've added MTH 4449s in both SP and AFT livery, I need to get educated!

**Henry H. Hurley, Sr.**  
Seattle, WA

*Hi, Henry, Dave actually covered the more expensive and advanced version, the DCS System, so the DCS Commander is a reduced function set from that. The review appeared in our April 2006 edition, months before the DCS Commander actually went on the market. You can operate MTH locos in DCC, DCS, and plain old DC. The Commander gives you DCS and DC while allowing pass-through of DCC signals from your own DCC system. —John*

**Brass coverage**

Being a long time reader and subscriber to MRN, you do miss one important part of this hobby which you do not cover or even mention: brass collecting and occasional operating. While I realize that many modelers consider this an area for the "rich boys," that isn't really the case. For example, the consignment cases at the larger model RR stores usually have a reasonable selection at less-than-dealer prices of used brass. In my own experience, even for all the flaws of eBay, brass is widely available there at massive discounts from the original pricing. I have had nothing but good experiences there...just use common sense.

I think at the very least you might run an occasional review, critique, or even how-to column or review on brass. I model the current era GE and EMD diesels. Living close to the Donner mainline in California I see BNSF and UP regularly at work on the hill and also in the Feather River Canyon.

While I realize that current Overland diesel models sell for close to that proverbial \$1,000 bill (and that's in HO) and are in fact sold out the minute they get here, you could still examine one of these and be astounded at the state of the art of brass manufacture. I am, having received both a UP Heritage model of the SD70AC and a BNSF version of a late model GE.

Anyway, I believe that a lot of modelers would be intrigued by what is available and also would appreciate an impartial review of some of these exquisite pieces.



I know I'm biased to diesel, but there's also a whole brass steamer subgroup out there. And yes, they still make new brass steamers. Just order early.

**George Andrassy**  
Aubrun, CA

*Well, George, this gets into our business model. Most brass importers won't part with a sample that our reviewer may keep in order to test it extensively, do the review, and later respond to questions that might come up. And while brass may be the loco of choice for many modelers, a vastly larger part of the market is completely satisfied with styrene and die-cast at a much lower price. We don't cover locos off the used market at all, so the discounts you mention are beyond our pale.*

*The fact that so many new brass runs are sold out also means they aren't news, since after reading our review, you can't go out and buy a new one. We actually have covered brass, but we did it in the book section where we reviewed The Brass Train Guide Book and Brass Model Trains Price & Data Guide. These two fine publications provide any interested modeler a very good entry point into understanding the brass marketplace. These books by Dan Glasure appeared in our July and August editions last year. I can hint at even better news for you, George. We have a brass cover story coming up in the near future. Stay tuned! —John*

### Minimum Radius?

I read your fine magazine from cover to cover, then start again!

I do have a suggestion for the "Review Section." I model HO scale: your in-depth comments on HO-scale steam locos is always helpful in my deciding which steamer to purchase.

But, (there's always a "but!") could you please state the minimum the larger steamers can negotiate? Some of my mainline has no. four turnouts and 18-inch radius curves.

Having been assured by a local dealer that a 2-10-2 would do just fine, sure enough it was a NO-WAY situation. NOT "now-way!" Fortunately the dealer accepted my reason for returning the loco and refunded money. Perhaps other HO-scale modelers have had the same situation.

**John O. Roy**  
Wallingford, CT

*Hi John, read from cover-to-cover and then*

*start again? Sounds like a copy editor to me! In most of our reviews, the minimum radius is in there somewhere. I've done a number of reviews on ten-coupled steamers, and I'd start them on the 30-inch radius, crossover to 27, down to 24, over to 21, and run them through Number 4 switches onto 18-inch radius curves. None of the 2-10-2/2-10-4 group got below 24 inches without binding or derailing, and a couple had some binding problems on 27! All of that was mentioned in each review. On occasion, a writer will either forget to put it in and editing doesn't catch it, or the loco negotiates 18 inch/No. 4 conditions, and they usually only mention radius when it becomes an issue. We'll do our best to make sure this get mentioned in future reviews. —John*

### Atlas N undertable switch machines revisited

This is in regards to Bob Gatlano's letter in the January 2009 issue about Atlas under the table switch machines. I have 41 HO-scale under the table Atlas switch machines. More than half of these are 15 years old, and I have never had a problem. I have three levels, so some of these switch machines I could not screw into place. I applied "goo" glue from Walthers and once in the right position, I duct taped them to hold them until the glue dried, then removed the duct tape. I am converting them to Digitrax DS64s and they are working perfectly. The secret is lining up the throw-rod of the motors and making sure the tension is the same in a closed or throw position by feeling this with your fingers as you manually throw the switch motor from under the table or use the push button connected to the switch motors if you can't reach the switch machines. Also, my DT400 Digitrax controller shows me on the screen if the switch is thrown or closed, eliminating the use of indicator lights.

Bob Gatlano stated that a 1/4-inch including the thickness of the roadbed and table is the maximum thickness for the throw rod, is not accurate. My table is 3/4-inch plywood plus cork roadbed. When I insert the throw rod, line it up, and secure the switch machine with screws or glue, I still have to cut a little off so it's flush with the tie. Plus I drill a 5/8-inch hole through the cork roadbed and plywood giving me plenty of room to throw the rod without binding.

**John Morel**  
Arlington, TX

### Reaction to JMRI #1

The timing of the JMRI article couldn't have been any better. For the last three months I have been debating what software to purchase. I was told by a salesperson at DCC Train that Loco Buffer USB would be the best choice for computer/Loconet transfer. I have the Digitrax Empire Builder with a DT400 throttle, but that lacks performance in what I would like to do. The JMRI Decoder Pro sounds like the best option. I was going to start entering all my locomotive and data into Excel, but then I am still stuck with re-entering the data through the throttle.

I have my business on MS Access database and like the performance I have there. The JMRI Decoder Pro software would be a very welcomed addition to my layout and concerns.

Will be looking forward to the article on Decoder Pro as well as computer control of DCC layouts.

**Jerry Grace**  
Tigard, OR

*That's why JMRI exists, Jerry. The Decoder Pro application is slowly making order out of my own chaos of file cards and questions about what decoder I actually installed in which loco. —John*

### Can't find MRC Prodigy on JMRI

A thorough search of the JMRI web site, [jmri.sourceforge.net](http://jmri.sourceforge.net), failed to show any evidence that the MRC Prodigy Advance DCC control system is supported at this time by JMRI software. Is this correct or have I just missed something? I really enjoyed your article on JMRI in the *Model Railroad News*, Jan 2009 issue.

**Allan Allbritton**  
Gonzales, LA

*As of this writing, Allan, MRC hasn't put a computer interface capability on any of their DCC Command Stations. They are reported to be looking into such an implementation, but that still doesn't mean that JMRI will be supported. JMRI is in the Java computer language, and for it to be encoded properly, MRC would have to supply the details of their throttle protocol, something they haven't done so far. Keep your fingers crossed! —John*



### **I never met a scale I didn't like!**

I am a modeller living in the UK and discovered *Model Railroad News* only a few months ago at a local news-agent shop here in Coventry. Your magazine is unique in my experience in that it "does what it says on the tin" (to quote a line in a well known advert!) and deals with news of railroad models of all scales. Maybe though, you really should say "all known scales" as I am about to show you some of my models in a scale that I doubt you have covered so far!

Apart from an enduring interest in US/ Canadian model railroads/railways, I also have a life-long interest in small scale models ships — 1/1200 scale — that's 1 inch to 100 feet.

When my kids were young I ran an 00, 4mm/ft scale, UK outline railway for them — mainly Hornby and Lima at that time. Container trains were a popular feature as they had lots of "play value" for the kids with loading/off-loading and trucking as well. It was after they had grown up that I first travelled to

North America and saw double stack trains for the first time.

I was knocked out!

I now run Lionel/MTH/K Line O gauge on tinplate track in my garden when the weather is fine. On a warm summer afternoon I can sit with a beer (or maybe two) and watch 35-foot long trains rattle past with horns blowing and bells ringing. However, in poor weather the trains do not run, which leads me back to the subject of this letter — 1/1200 ships.

I think it must be something about the order and symmetry of the 'boxes' that attracts me to intermodal traffic; I find both trains and ships fascinating and decided last year to create a display showing these models in a harbour setting. This resulted in a lot of work!

Dockside quays and warehouses are available from Triang Minic Ships — these are zinc, die-cast models that replicate a range originally available in the 1960s, which I had when I was a kid. At the moment they do not make trains or container cranes as accessories, but they

do make suitable ships. To achieve my aims I had to make my own trains and cranes and then display them using Triang harbour pieces with both Triang, and ships from other manufacturers.

The photos enclosed show the locomotive — loosely based on the GE AC44 model — and a typical modern well car, others show the display I created. I made the masters for these models out of plastic card and then cast them in white metal using RTV rubber moulds. The well cars are modelled empty and the containers cast as separate loads. All were painted individually then the containers were glued into place in the well cars. The cranes are a freelance design, as I could not get any decent plans. They were also made from plastic card and cast in the same way as the railroad cars with aluminium rodding added during assembly. Unfortunately, the close-up shots show lots of faults (!) but from a "normal" viewing distance of a few feet I think the overall effect is pretty good.

I hope you find this story of interest and might find room for my letter in a future

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edition of *Model Railroad News*. You can then claim with complete honesty that you do indeed, cover "all scales!"

Jeffrey Stevenson  
Coventry, England, UK



Thanks, Jeffrey. I couldn't close this column without a couple of the pictures you sent me. 1:1200 scale has long been a shipbuilding mecca, but it's a natural for trains — if you don't mind containers that are only about 5 millimeters long! It looks as though your photos on the ruler show a metric ruler, and so your loco and car are less than a centimeter long, each. Model that! —John

We'd love to hear from you. Write:

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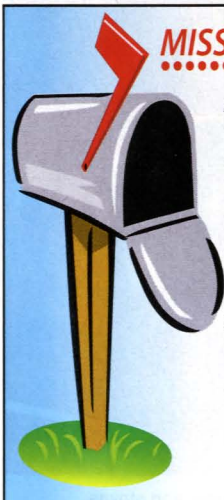
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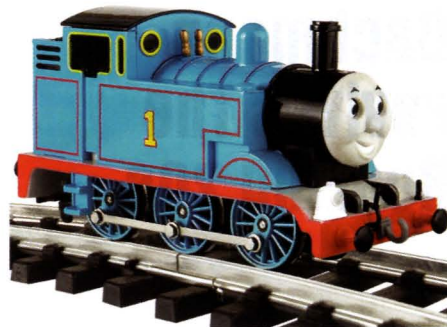


# Thomas & Friends to be released in Large Scale

PHILADELPHIA, PA — Bachmann Trains has announced a licensing agreement with HIT Entertainment through which Bachmann is granted rights to manufacture and distribute Large Scale Thomas & Friends products in the United States and Canada.

Bachmann first introduced HO-scale Thomas & Friends products in 2002, and over the years has worked closely with HIT Entertainment to create train sets and separate-sale offerings that deliver railroading adventures to children of all ages.

"Bachmann's expansion into Large Scale is a natural progression in this relationship" reads a statement released by the company.



New product announcements for Bachmann's Large Scale Thomas & Friends offerings will be made at Toy Fair '09 in New York.

Bachmann Industries, 1400 E Erie Ave,  
Philadelphia, PA 19124-5698; 800-223-3364;  
Fax: 215-744-4699; [www.bachmanntrains.com](http://www.bachmanntrains.com)

## Custom Finishing under new ownership

PFLUGERVILLE, TX — Custom Finishing of Orange, MA which was owned by Bob Rzasa was recently purchased by James Kocher and is now headquartered in Pflugerville, TX. The new name of the business is Custom Finishing Models. According to the new owners, CFM will be offering the same high-quality Maintenance of Way kits as well as the detail parts that Rzasa offered. Along with the kits and de-

tail parts, CFM will also offer any of the kits completely assembled for display on layouts or display shelves.

The company web site was not yet fully operational at press time, and we were unable to reach a spokesperson for additional details.

Custom Finishing Models, 17911  
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| 99236   | 3-Bay Pullman-Standard covered hopper, gray, dimensional data only, Ready-to-Run, metal wheelsets, McHenry couplers | \$12.95 |
| 99243   | 40' container, 3-pk, APL, steel, one container nbr                                                                  | \$21.95 |
| 99244   | 20' container, 3-pk, APL, vert. logo, one container nbr                                                             | \$16.95 |
| 99245   | 20' container, 3-pk, APL, large logo, one container nbr                                                             | \$16.95 |
| 99246   | 40' container, 3-pk, APL, vert. logo, one container nbr                                                             | \$21.95 |
| 99260   | 45' container, 3-pk, Evergreen, 3 container nbrs                                                                    | \$24.95 |
| 99295   | 20' container, 3-pk, US military, 3 container nbrs                                                                  | \$17.95 |
| 99303   | 45' container, 3-pk, MOL, 3 container nbrs                                                                          | \$24.95 |
| 99315   | 40' container, 3-pk, APL, corner logo, 3 container nbrs                                                             | \$21.95 |
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**REVIEW On30**

## Railbus: Bachmann revives The Roaring 20s

Review and Photos by Pete Birdsong,  
MMR

Bachmann Railbus and Trailer, with  
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**T**HE Bachmann Railbus comes with a Bachmann DCC On Board standard DCC decoder already installed. The railbus is available painted unlettered in two colors: Olive Green with black roof, and silver with black roof. Lettered versions include the Little River Logging Company in red/black, Pocahontas Lumber Co. in yellow/black, Colorado Mining Co. in olive/black, Greenbrier & Big Run Lumber Co. in

| By-The-Numbers                       |           |       |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|-------|
| Four Wheel Drive Railbus             |           |       |
| Bachman Trains                       |           |       |
| On30 1:48                            | Type: Gas |       |
| Traction Tires? No                   |           |       |
| Pull Power (Ozs @ Full Slip)         |           |       |
| Pull ÷ Loco Wt = Efficiency          |           |       |
| Railbus only w/standard decoder      |           |       |
| .75                                  | 6.75      | 11%   |
| Railbus & trailer w/standard decoder |           |       |
| .75                                  | 12.0      | 6.25% |
| DCC                                  |           |       |
| Stall Amps (if applicable): N.A.     |           |       |
| w/ Standard Decoder                  |           |       |
| Speed Step (of 128)                  | Scale MPH |       |
| Min                                  | 08.96     | .04   |
| Mid                                  | 64.00     | 18    |
| Max                                  | 128.00    | 24    |

Green/black, and Midwest Quarry & Mining Co. in silver/black.

The model comes in the traditional green and gold box with a hard plastic inner shell. The box cover has a clear insert, making the railbus and trailer both visible without opening the box. Included are a one-year warranty with instructions for obtaining warranty and ex-warranty repair service, a registration

card, a large fold-out of instructions and exploded parts diagrams, and a notice about use of non-NMRA conformant decoders with the Bachmann products.

Extra parts include a muffler to install on the bottom of the railbus, a snowplow which can be mounted instead of the stock pilot, a small wire for opening/closing the bi-fold front cab doors, and a dummy plug to replace the decoder if desired. Both the railbus and the trailer are equipped with E-Z Mate Mark II knuckle couplers front and rear, and a Bachmann DCC On Board standard decoder for motor and light functions.

### The Prototype

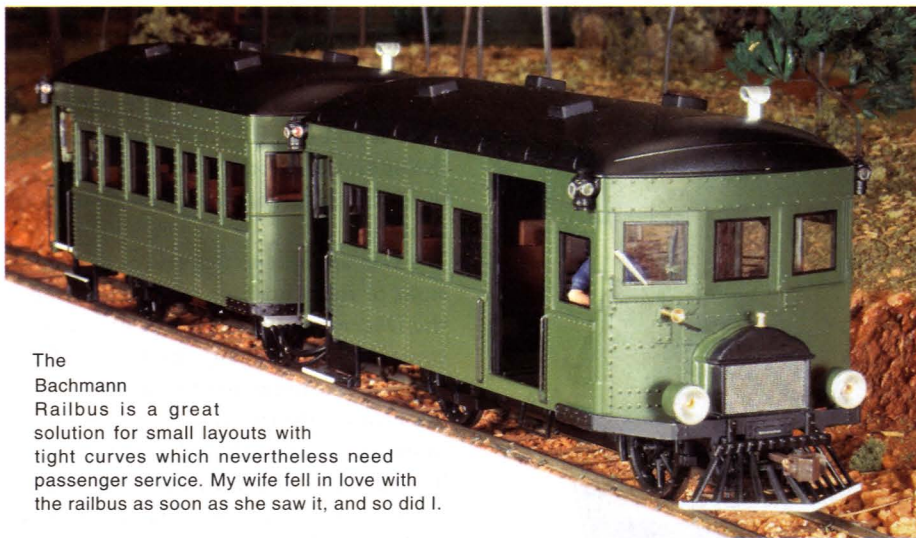
The Buffalo Creek and Gauley shortline railroad hauled coal over less than twenty miles of track in Virginia from 1906 until 1965. It was formed as a subsidiary of its predecessor Elk River Coal & Lumber Co. Its track was used subsequently by a couple of endeavors, and the BC&G Co-operative is currently trying to re-establish it as a tourist railroad. More about the history of the railroad can be found at: [www.buffalocreekandgauley.com/index.html](http://www.buffalocreekandgauley.com/index.html).

Among the roster of 28 engines, there were two diesels and two railbuses, the latter numbered AC, built by Mack and Brill in 1921, and B, built by Four Wheel Drive Company (FWD) and



The model looks like a dead ringer for the BC&G prototype. It comes with a motorman in the cab. Interiors are detailed, and include seats and stoves.





The Bachmann Railbus is a great solution for small layouts with tight curves which nevertheless need passenger service. My wife fell in love with the railbus as soon as she saw it, and so did I.

Brill in 1922. The B-unit is claimed as the source for the Bachmann model. It was chain-driven by a 36 horsepower, four-cylinder engine with a three-speed gearbox. In addition to Brill, the St. Louis Car Company and Boston (using the Brill design) built bodies for the FWD chassis. Other railroads also used these designs.

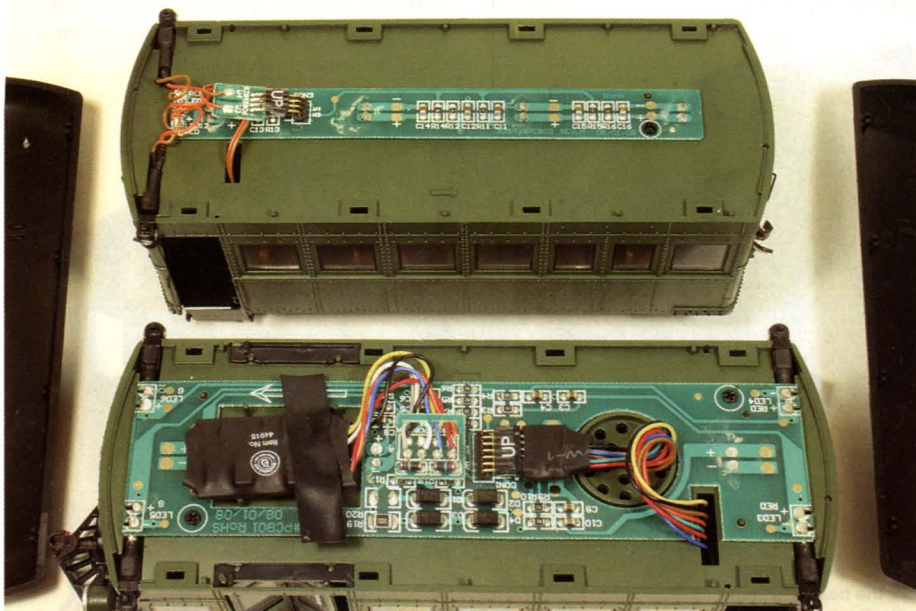
The original BC&G car had arched windows and a third headlight, mounted above the hood. The arched windows were replaced and the third headlight removed later. More on the car, including pictures, is available at: [www.buffalocreekandgauley.com/LOCOMOTIVES/BusB/RailbusB.html](http://www.buffalocreekandgauley.com/LOCOMOTIVES/BusB/RailbusB.html).

I could find no reference to a trailer

for the prototype, and information on Bachmann's web site concedes that no narrow gauge versions of this railbus were made, but that they were available, so this is a might-have-been model.

### The Bachmann Model

This model looks like a dead ringer for the BC&G prototype. The roof hatches and chimneys match the prototype pictures, as well as the horn, headlight, doors, and steps. It features a factory-installed Bachmann DCC on Board decoder for speed, direction, and lighting control, operating headlight and running lights on the bus, and operating running lights on the trailer. I did spot one difference from the prototype

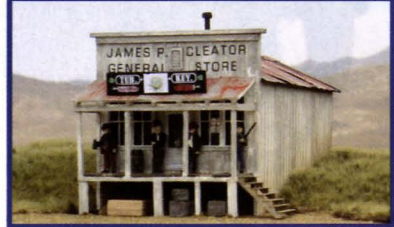


The side of a knife blade will remove the tops of the units, revealing the printed circuit boards underneath. The board in the motorbus includes a plugged-in decoder and space for a speaker if you want to add sound. It controls the motor functions, headlights, and the four running lights. The board in the trailer controls rear running lights only. A four-wire cable connects the two units, providing electrical pickup from all eight wheels.

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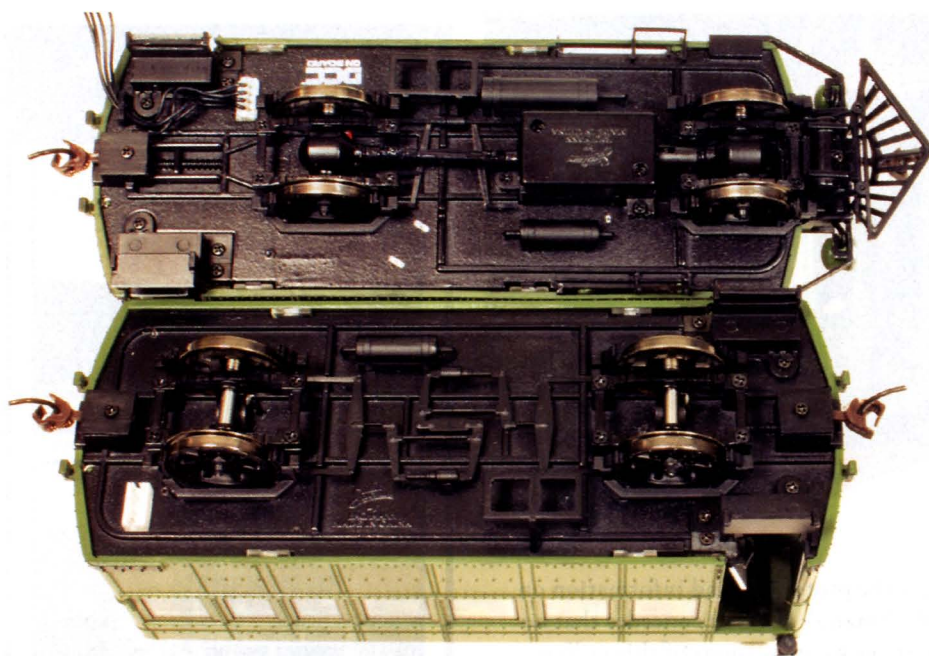
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The undercarriages are even more detailed than the topsides. Universal joints drive both front and rear wheels. The two white spots located diagonally and about halfway back on the motorbus are mounting spots for the separately applied muffler.

pictures: the model has a windshield wiper on the right windshield, while on the prototype it was on the center windshield.

Other features of the Bachmann model include a wealth of underbody and interior details, including stoves in both units, a driver in the railbus, interior seating, operating doors (including bi-folds on the railbus), and operating fold-up steps. Detailing (rivets, grabs, even the horizontal etching in the bi-fold door

windows) is well done, and the paint well executed, with no running or splotching.

The railbus and trailer are connected physically by the couplers and electrically by a four-wire plug-in connector, which serves electrical pickup from all eight wheels, and power for the running lights.

The front and rear of both the railbus and the trailer have operating HO E-Z Mate couplers. Although a little small for O scale, they mate well with the rest of the Bachmann line of On30 engines and rolling stock.

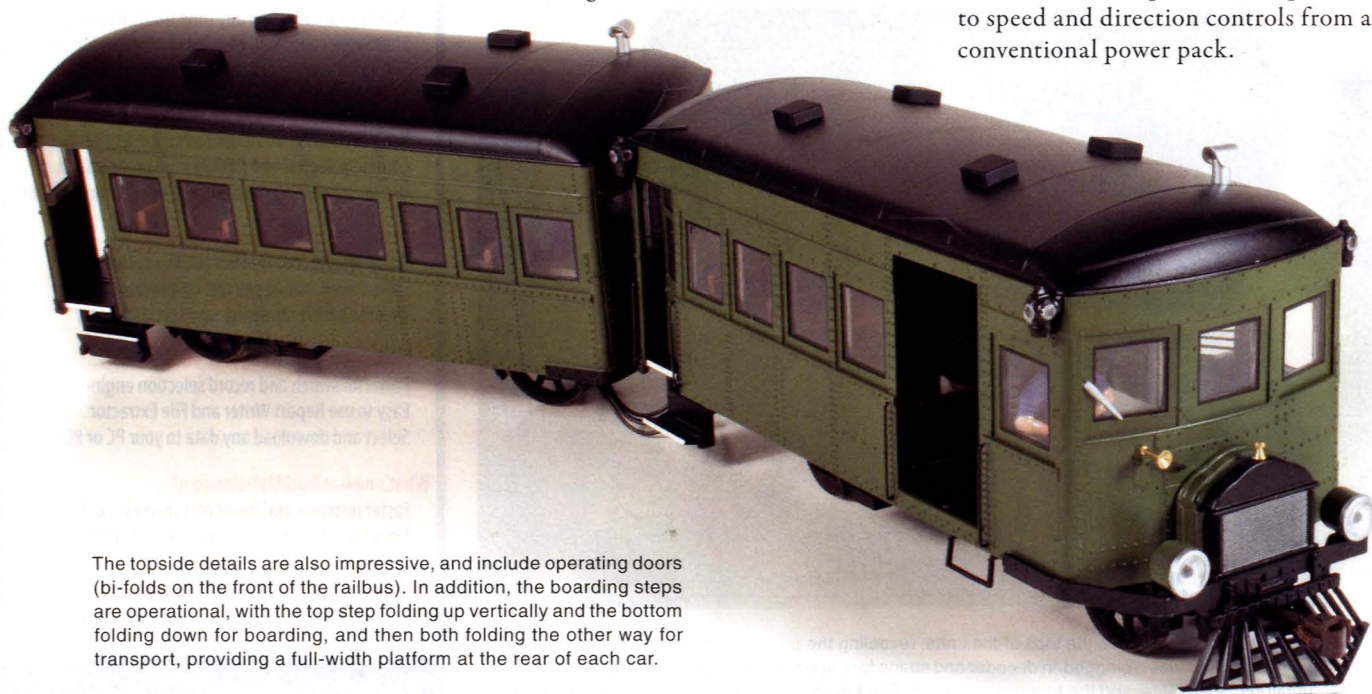
Each unit rides on four chassis-mounted spoked wheels, so they are extremely easy to put on the rails, a real benefit on narrow gauge models, since it's more difficult to reach under the bodies to direct swiveling trucks onto the rails in narrow gauge than in standard.

I was not able to determine dimensions of the prototype of this model, but the December 1997 NMRA Bulletin contains scale drawings by Pete Moffett, MMR. Measurements for critical dimensions for the model and from the drawing (in parentheses) are as follows: 23- (25) feet long between coupler faces by 10- (11.25) feet high at the top of the roof, by 6- (8) feet 6- (9) inches wide not counting the running lights. The wheels measured 33- (39) inches in diameter. The trailer cabin is the same length as that of the railbus, but its overall length is about two feet shorter, since the bus is extended with the hood and pilot.

All wheels were in gauge as checked with the NMRA HO-scale Standards Gauge; the couplers were the correct height, and mated well with Kadee couplers. The model was inside the limits of the NMRA On30 clearance gauge.

## Operation

As stated in the instruction sheet, this decoder automatically detects the presence of analog direct current (DC) control, and it responded as expected to speed and direction controls from a conventional power pack.



The topside details are also impressive, and include operating doors (bi-folds on the front of the railbus). In addition, the boarding steps are operational, with the top step folding up vertically and the bottom folding down for boarding, and then both folding the other way for transport, providing a full-width platform at the rear of each car.





The railbus and trailer both negotiate tight curves, thanks to their short wheelbases.

On Digital Command Control (DCC) the model will creep along at well under one scale mph (I measured .04 smph), starting up and running at a throttle setting of seven (speed step 8.96). It ran smoothly at all speeds, with some minor gear noise. It will actually move at a throttle setting lower than seven, but will stall at some points then.

Out of curiosity, I hooked up a string of nine freight cars behind the two units, and was surprised to see them hauling that consist along, around curves and up grades with no problem.

I could probably have added more cars, but figured that was impressive enough.

It accelerated smoothly and slowly through the entire speed range, up to a maximum of about 24 scale miles per hour. Other than speed and direction, the only other functions available are light dimming and light on/off. If you want sound or more functionality, it should be very easy to swap out the standard Bachmann decoder for one with sound and additional functions, given the plug and the speaker grill under the roof, although clearance for the larger decoders may not be adequate. But

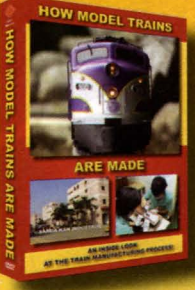
there's plenty of room inside if that's a problem. The roof of both units pops off with a little persuasion from the side of a knife blade, revealing the printed circuit boards for each. The board for the railbus unit includes the decoder plug with the decoder mounted, and the speaker grill, which fires into the car interior.

The bodies of both units also pop off, but wiring runs from the roof to the chassis, so care must be taken when separating these two units from each other, in order to install passengers, whose tibia and fibula, by the way, should be very short.

The measured tractive power was plenty for the railbus, and as mentioned it pulled a consist of nine additional freight cars smoothly and without laboring. Running over number six turnouts and 22-inch curves on code 83 rail in both directions without problem, the railbus and trailer performed well in several passes over the layout, including a standard/narrow gauge crossing on a curve.

## Summary

The well-executed detail and good performance make for a quality product, and the price is reasonable. Upgrades to sound should be a snap. What a great way to add passenger service without taking a lot of room or requiring long sweeping curves to look right. Prototype purists may have a few minor problems with it, but it's already one of my favorites. Even my wife loved the Bachmann railbus; what more could you ask?



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## New F-line PCC streetcars from Bowser



L.A. Railway Car 1052. Photo courtesy of Bowser.

**HO** — Bowser has released new PCC streetcars that initiated the "F-Line" service in September 1995. The F-line operation began along Market Street from the Castro district to the East bay Terminal. The line became extremely popular, gaining as many native riders as tourists. On March 4, 2000, the line was extended to Fisherman's Wharf via the renovated Embarcadero. The F-line historic streetcar line is currently the most successful vintage rail line, with about 20,000 riders per day.

Bowser's model features a new injection molded plastic body, window glass, dummy roof poles, operating headlight, and accurate painting and decorating. These paint schemes are the cars running today. The cars are powered with Bowser can motor drive with flywheel.



The F-Line PCC streetcars are available in the following roadnames: Los Angeles Railway Car 1052, two-tone yellow, with silver stripes (#12552); Philadelphia Transportation Company Car 1055 green and cream, with red belt rail (#12555); Cincinnati Street Railway Car 1057 (#12557) yellow and gray, with green stripes; and the Pacific Electric Railway Car 1061 red, orange, and gray, post 1940 scheme (#12561). The models retail for \$124.95 each.

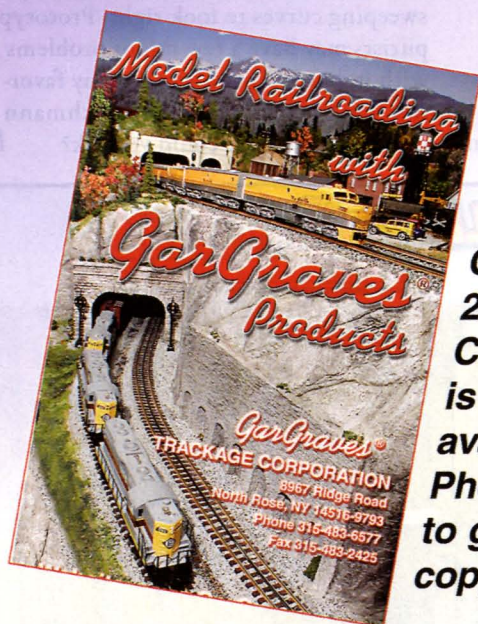
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## Milwaukee Road boxcars from Rib Side Cars



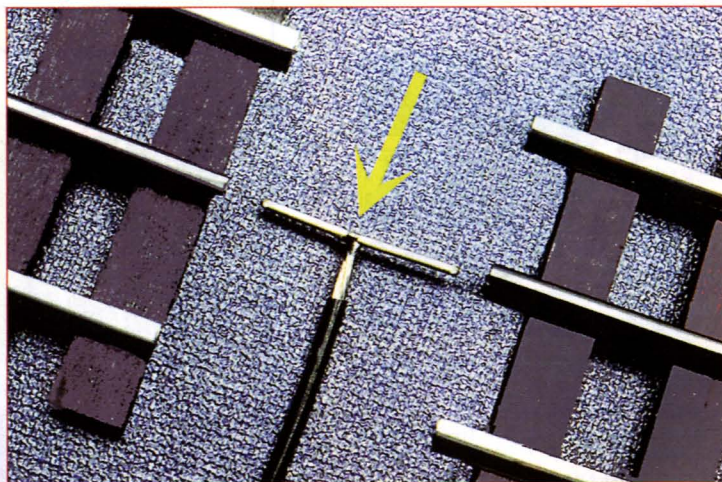
**HO** — Rib Side Cars has released their new 50-foot short rib narrow door Milwaukee Road boxcars. The car comes in three paint schemes and undecorated (#5260). Schemes include: *Route of the Hiawathas* (#5261), *Route of the Electrified Olympian* (#5262), and the third has billboard lettering and large logo (#5263). The cars are printed without a roadnumber and a decal is provided for that, plus weigh date and build date. The boxcar retails for \$19.39 each.

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## Amtrak P42 "Superliner" starter kit re-released



N — Kato has announced the re-release of the Amtrak P42 "Superliner" starter set. The prototype can be found in many parts of the United States. The set includes a locomotive with three "Superliner" passenger cars, an oval of track, and power pack. The interior of the passenger cars can be lighted with the optional installation of the Interior Lighting Kit (#11-209 single, & #11-210 6-pack).

Additional four-car sets and locomotives are also available to add to the set. The backside of the box contains additional layout combinations using the Master and Variation set packages. The Amtrak starter set (#106-0015) retails for \$270.00.

Kato U.S.A. Inc., 100 Remington Rd.,  
Schaumburg, IL 60173-3705; 847-781-9500;  
Fax: 847-781-9570; [www.katousa.com](http://www.katousa.com)

## PROTO 1000 GP15-1s feature new drives

HO — Walthers has announced the addition of the GP15-1 diesels to the Proto 1000 locomotive lineup. These ready-to-run engines are available in eight roadnames and as undecorated models.



Introduced in 1975 as a replacement for aging GP7s and GP9s, the 1,500 horsepower GP15-1 was better suited to the bigger cars entering service, while the low nose improved forward visibility. EMD required customers to provide a trade-in unit which supplied traction motors, trucks, and main generators, reducing the price. GP15-1s looked like 35 Series engines, but had a single 48-inch fan and "tunnel motor" style radiator. Later versions included the GP15-1AC with an alternator and the GP15T, a turbocharged AC model. Nearly 370 GP15-1s were built between 1976 and 1983 and many are still going strong today.

Walthers states that the locomotive is equipped with a new drive, and features a 14:1 gear ratio for easy multiple-unit operations. They also sport helical gears and a five-pole, skew-wound, high-torque, high-efficiency can motor.

The locomotive is available with Farr Air Filters, and two roadnumbers for the following roadnames: UP Yard Scheme (#693 & #716); NS (#1446 & #1452); CSX "Dark Future" (#1545 & #1551); and CR "Quality" Slogan (#1650 & #1685).

The following roadnames are available in two roadnumbers, and with Internal Air Filters:

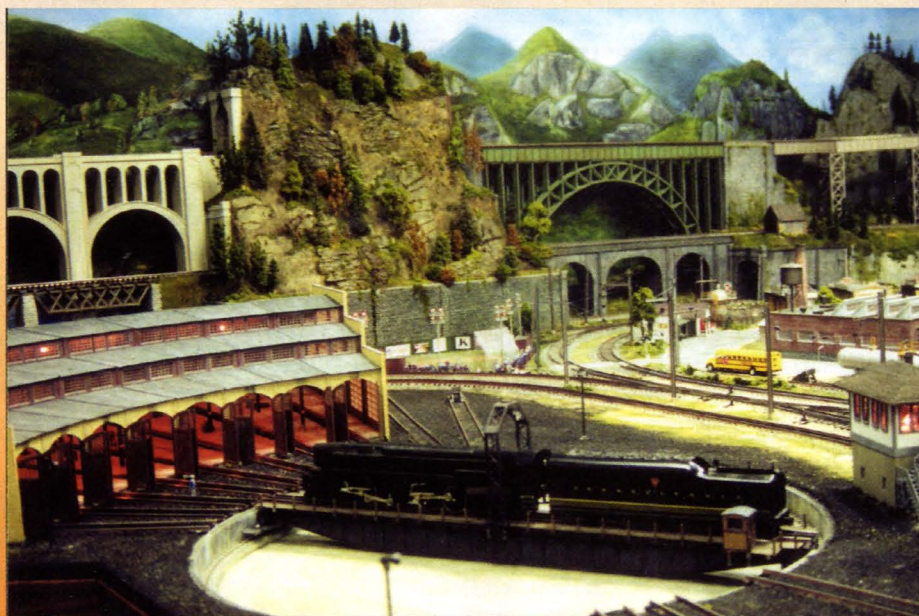
BNSF Heritage Scheme (#1478) and Patch Scheme (#1496); BN White Front (#1385 & #1386); CNW yellow and green (#4404 & #4409); and California Northern green and white (#108 & #112). An undecorated version is available with either Internal Air Filters (#920-35050) or Farr Air Filters (#920-35070). The GP15-1 retails for \$109.98.

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# Atlas delivers range of HO-scale covered hoppers

Review and Photos by John Sipple

Covered hopper, MSRP: \$29.95

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**B**ACK in the late 1860s, the concept of shippers owning freight cars was established with petroleum tank cars, but the concept spread. Mileage

allowances were granted by the railroads in return for them not having to own the cars. As the ICC and other regulatory groups stepped in to specify what they expected in a freight car's design, a triangular relationship was established. Carmakers learned to build cars that both met the needs of the shipper and follow the dictates of safe car design. Shippers learned how to load and unload cars at each end using specially designed facilities, and railroads learned how to handle privately owned cars.

The covered hopper is a case in point. First, the hopper stepped away from the flat car design by creating permanent unloading hatches of varying designs in the bottom of the car. This allowed the car to be loaded rapidly on the top and unloaded just as quickly out the bottom. To help expedite this process, special facilities were constructed at each end, and railroads learned how to handle long strings of nearly identical cars for even greater efficiency.

If open-top hoppers were fine for coal and rock, many bulk commodities had more specific needs, and that's where the covered hopper came into existence. Special loading hatches were designed into the permanent top cover, and unloading systems were developed that considered the needs of a given commodity. In all of this were some realities: when a car was designed for a specific commodity, it could not be used for another product without risking contamination. Also, how one commodity was handled was not necessarily what another one would need.

As a result, companies such as American Car & Foundry (ACF) didn't just design a car; they worked to make this car part of an entire system. If the car would handle plastic pellets used for injection molding, it would have ten round loading hatches on top; corn or wheat berries go in through five long loading hatches. The grain commodity



On the top we have the 5701 Center Flow. Note the single foot rung as opposed to the dual rungs on the other two. Also note the tabs sticking

down by the outboard wheel in each truck. In the center is the Center Flow 5800. On the bottom is the 5748 Center Flow equipped for grain.





This is the B-end of the 5748, showing the brake equipment. You can see the trainline running along the lower edge on the side. Bring a magnifying glass and you can enjoy some interesting reading on these cars. It's all crisp and legible.

business wants slide gates and gravity unloading while the plastic pellets are drawn out with giant vacuum cleaners.

### The Atlas ACF Center Flow Hopper

Atlas produces their Center Flow hoppers in a nice assortment of roadnames and numbers plus several varieties of capacities and hatches. At the bottom of the whole model is the basic ACF Center Flow concept. Once upon a time, hoppers had a long center sill that ran from one end to the other, and cars were

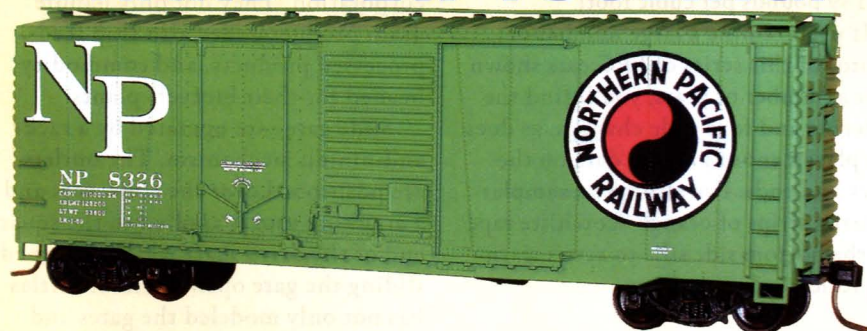
unloaded through hoppers that were divided down the middle. ACF started with the concept that there would be no center beam and so the product in the hopper would flow right out through the center, hence "Center Flow."

A Center Flow also has internal methods for "streamlining" the commodity within the car, making it easier to load and empty while also increasing the fill percentage. The rounding of the sides and roof led to less waste space and weight while increasing the actual loaded volume. In the process, this has

created a car with pleasant lines and a unique appearance. While many of the early Center Flows had the general appearance of a cylindrical hopper, by 1965 the specific swoop-ended Center Flow design began to appear. It is this design concept that finds its way in the Atlas cars. This is sometimes referred to as the "teardrop design."

Our samples are all four-bay types, designed for the lightest bulk commodities. Plastic pellets, cornstarch, light animal feeds, coke, and carbon blacks are some examples of this sort. As products be-

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This shot shows both the grain loading hatches on the left and the plastic pellet loading ports on the right. Different oddities for different commodities. We also get a look at the differences between the B-end on the left and the A-end on the right.

come heavier, the total volume decreases and so there are also three- and two-bay hoppers of the same general design.

Some common features you will find on Center Flow cars are the trainline, which runs along the bottom right side since it cannot run down the middle! Ladders and roofwalks are found on all of them, but these are not for general railroad use. Only those personnel involved in loading, unloading, and cleaning are allowed up there, and then only when the cars are at a complete stop. Atlas has done a wonderful job of recreating the see-through decks on top and the trainline piping and hangers on the correct side.

### ACF 5701 cubic foot plastic pellet hopper

This car would be the oldest of the three in real life, constructed during the early to mid seventies. The first of the 5701 series appeared in 1972. What sets it visually apart from the later version is the single step foot rungs on each corner and the hanger tabs on the bottom sills. The later cars had dual step rungs and no hanger tabs. The 5701 has inspection hatches on the sides of each hopper, something that is gone on later products.

This particular car is lettered to be FPCX 70050. Firestone Plastic Company has been absorbed into Occidental Petroleum and these reporting marks have been assigned to subsidiary Oxy Vinyls LP. The letter "X" on the end signifies the holder is a private car owner. This car is designed to weigh — car and cargo combined — 263,000 pounds. It is considered to have a total cargo volume of 5,701 cubic feet, which calculates to about 46 pounds per cubic foot. Just for comparison, a 1,892 cubic foot covered cement hopper would rack up 139 pounds per cubic foot!

If you examine a large number of photos of this series of FPC cars shown over a number of years, you'll find the lettering and font style changes, as does the placement of painted data on the sides and ends. I've also seen examples wearing strips of orange Scotchlite tape on the bottom side sills to act as warning reflectors.

### ACF 5800 cubic foot plastic pellet hopper

By the eighties, there was a demand to increase the total capacity of the car, and so ACF took pains to reduce the

car's weight in order to accommodate a larger volume without exceeding the 263,000 pound limit. The 5800 was the proposed solution, and several hundred of them were built and deployed. Unfortunately, they didn't perform as well as expected, and the 5800 was taken out of the catalog. However, most are still at work.

The 5800 is a nine-panel design, having that many full panels on each side. The earlier 5701 only had eight panels in a car that is the same length. More smaller structural ribs were intended to give the same structural strength while using less space inside. As with the 5701, the 5800 used pneumatic outlets that allowed the unloader to employ a high-volume vacuum hose on each of the four outlets.

It should come as no surprise that the DOWX reporting marks are assigned to Dow Chemical. The paint scheme depicted here even has the Scotchlite vertical strips.

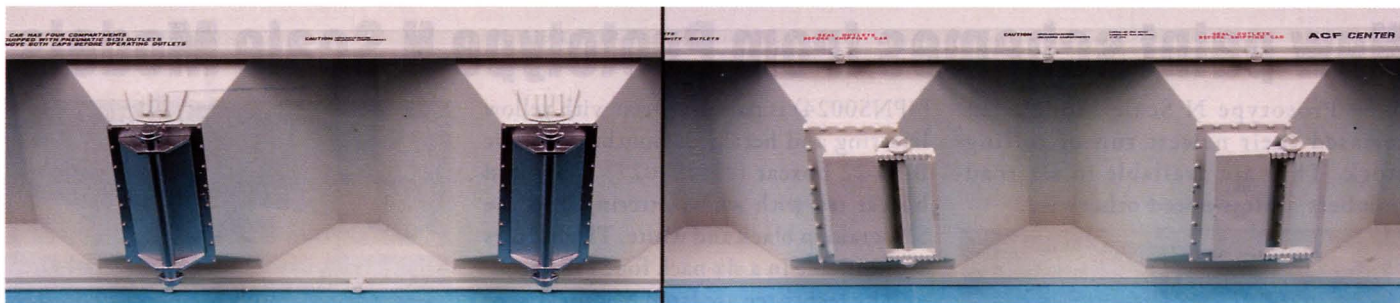
### ACF 5748 Grain Hopper

We know this is a grain hopper because it has five long inlet hatches along the top and four slide gates on the bottom, one for each outlet hopper. The actual unloading appliances are bolted to a rectangular flange at the bottom of each formed hopper, and the Atlas depiction of this is excellent. Thus, a good shop crew could conceivably change one type of outlet appliance for another. Changing the top hatch types would not be so easy, however.

The SAMX reporting marks were originally assigned to Seaboard Allied Milling Corporation but now they belong to Cargill, a multinational corporation. They not only handle grain products, they also ship feeds, processed products, and commodity headed for their biofuels plants.

Slide gates are operated by a rack-and-pinion mechanism. The outlets are positioned over the collectors and a cranking tool is applied to the square end of the drive shaft which is turned, sliding the gate open or closed. Atlas has not only modeled the gates and drive shaft, it also has teeth on the racks. It correctly portrays the three rear hoppers as opening forward while the front hopper points the opposite direction.





These cars make a pretty good teaching aid, the left side showing clearly how the vacuum unloading is set up while the right displays the sliding gates.

Of equal interest is that the cars are designed so that either equipment could be installed, meaning the top hatches can also be to order.

## Features

The trucks look like Barber S-2 types with 36-inch wheels. All wheel sets on all three cars were in gauge, according to the NMRA Mark IV Gauge. A coupler check found all six couplers at a correct height, according to a Kadee Coupler Height Gauge checked against a Mark IV. All three cars are listed as being Plate C in the prototype, and I found the models to also fit the plate profile. The wheel treads have a diameter of 0.414 inches, which corresponds to a scale diameter of 36.018 inches, pretty good, I'd say.

The wheels are polished, unblackened metal with flanges that meet or exceed RP-25. Don't try to park these cars on any sort of grade; they'll roll away! *MRN* contributor Stephen Priest has weeds sticking up out of yard tracks to act as brakes for cars such as this. The roller bearing axle ends don't rotate, part of the reason for the smooth-rolling characteristics.

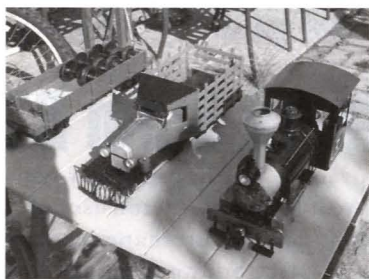
The couplers feature plastic magnet knuckle types with plastic centering and knuckle springs. Changing out the couplers would be a very easy business, since the coupler pocket conforms to the standards for HO. With a length over the strikers of about 8.5 inches, that would suggest an NMRA weight of 5.25 ounces. The two plastic pellet cars weighed in at 6.2 ounces while the Cargill hopper tipped the scales at 6.3 ounces. Other dimensions are very close to published drawings and measurements for these cars.

Paint on all three models is applied with a smooth uniformity that doesn't plug details and yet never wears thin. All of the lettering is legible if you bring the right magnifier. Graphics are consistent with the prototypes, but these cars are refreshingly delivered without graffiti. Roadnumbers are drawn from the actual series in which each car would be found. The monolithic eggshell white would love to be relieved with some weathering; I'm partial to chalks.

The "B" end of each car enjoys all of the airbrake plumbing that cannot be located beneath the car. It also has the hand brake and its wheel. Meanwhile, the handrails are durable items. As a rule, most prototype grabs and rails are 3/4-inch outside diameter, but these scale out to an average of over 2.5 inches. All of the other piping and such is far closer to scale, so this isn't a real distraction.

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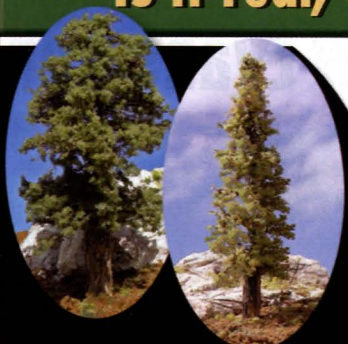
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# New paint schemes from Prototype N Scale Models

N — Prototype N Scale Models has released their newest run of rolling-stock. They are available in six road-numbers, unless noted otherwise.



The first two cars are from Intermountain: a Santa Fe FE-24 express boxcar

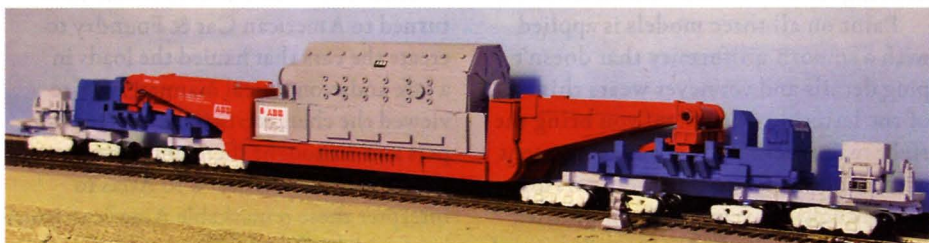
(#PNS0024) is painted green with yellow lettering and herald. A Southern Pacific B-50-22 boxcar (#PNS0027) is painted boxcar red with white lettering, and the SP herald in black and white. The boxcars are available in a six-pack for \$118.95.

The last three are from Micro-Trains: a set of three Rock Island 100th anniversary boxcars (#PNS0025) painted brown with a black roof and white lettering. A set of three Santa Fe GA-63 war emergency gondolas (#PNS0029) with tie loads is painted boxcar red with white lettering. The cars retail for \$79.95 per set. Finally, a set of three Santa Fe TK-L tankcars (#PNS0028) in the white Maintenance of Way scheme



Prototype N Scale Models, 310 Loma Verde St, Buda, TX 78610-9785; 512-796-6883

# New Schnabel car from Concept Models



Concept Models adds to their line of unique freight cars, this time with a Babcock & Wilcox BBCX 1,000 Schnabel car kit.

HO — Concept Models has released their newest model, the ABB BBCX 1,000 Schnabel car. The prototype is a 20-axle Schnabel car used with the

cradle and load, or ran empty with the two halves of the car joined together as in-transit mode.

The car is made of four kits: the basic car, the load cradle, the load, and a white truck frame kit. The models consist of resin castings and assembly hardware.

Hand grabs, ladders, and related detailing are not provided to avoid dependence on suppliers. The focus of these models is said to be for the modeler to exercise his skill in taking the model to the detail level desired. Instructions are all photo illustrated by an experienced technical writer.

The basic model retails for \$120.00, the load cradle is \$19.95, and the generator load is \$24.95. The optional white truck frame kit is available for \$14.95.

Concept Models, 44609 W. Canyon Creek Dr., Maricopa, AZ 85239-5019; E-mail: concept\_models@con-sys.com; www.con-sys.com



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# New Evans gondola kit from BTS



O — BTS has released a new undecorated Evans gondola kit.

In 1975, the Southern Iron and Equipment Co. started building a 52-foot 6-inch, 100 ton gondola. Evans took over SIECO and continued building the cars through December 1981. A total of 1,730 cars were built with three minor body variations. This model represents the second and the most com-

mon version of this particular car.

The unpainted kit consists of high-quality, no-odor urethane castings for the one-piece body and frame, hidden weight, and brass and white metal brake components. The gondola is assembled with ACC or epoxy. The kit does not include decals, trucks, or couplers. The decals available for the gondola are Main Central (#12720), which retails for \$7.95, and CNW (#12721), which retails for \$5.95. The gondola (#19201) is \$99.95.

BTS, RR 1 Box 141A, Belington, WV 26250; 304-823-3729; Fax: 304-823-2901; E-mail: bill@btsrr.com; www.btsrr.com



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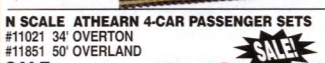
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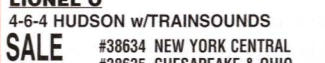
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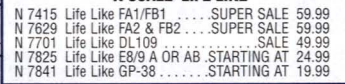
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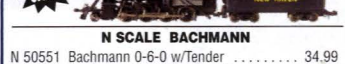
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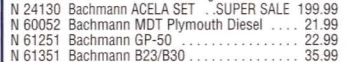
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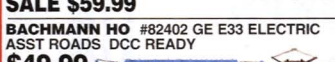
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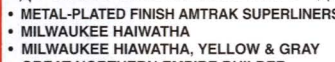
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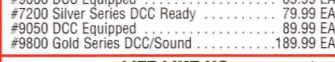
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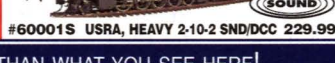
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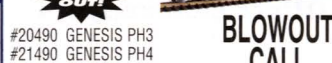


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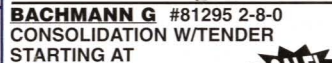
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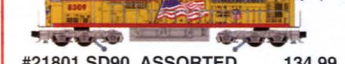


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# Aristo-Craft's two-bay hoppers fill a need for coal industries

Review and Photos by John Sipple

2-bay, offset side hopper, MSRP: \$80.00

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At this writing, Aristo-Craft is offering their Two-Bay Offset Side coal hoppers in four roadnames in black and five in brown. The black are D&RGW, N&W, B&O, and a no-roadname version with data lettering installed. The brown cars are Pennsy, ATSF, UP, Southern, and Great Northern.

## Offset side hoppers

In the 1800s, coal cars were basically gondolas that were loaded and unloaded manually by men with shovels. Yes, labor was cheap, but this was slow and inefficient. Coal tipples were created to dump the coal in the top, speeding the loading operations, but the real challenge was getting the coal back out of the car. Coal and other mineral commodities were deemed to require gravity loading and unloading, and that led to drop bottom gons and eventually the hopper car.



The B&O hopper on top still wears its plastic wheels for this photo. The roadnumber is out of an authentic series for this hopper. The Rio Grande hopper below now has new shoes in the form of metal wheels. This is a fantasy roadname because the Grande never had any two-bay coal hoppers. The number was wisely chosen in a blank in the roster.

Another issue figured into the development of the hopper car: steel. Right after the turn of the century, railroads and commodity handlers devised systems to load and unload hoppers, and the two-bay hopper first appeared, looking very much like two-bay hoppers ever thereafter. It wasn't until late in the Great Depression years that hoppers came up for some redesign.

In some cases, they got longer, holding more coal and having more hoppers. Still, many tipples and unloading facilities were set up to process 30- to 34-foot hoppers, and lots of track wasn't up to the additional weight of a loaded triple or quadruple hopper. The typical two-bay ran on a pair of 50 ton trucks, rating it for a hundred tons gross weight. A 42-foot triple hopper ran on a pair of 70 ton trucks, taking it to 140 tons on

the same four wheels, more than some track could bear.

In 1937, hopper cars started to appear with offset sides. From the outside, the car sides were flat and smooth, up to the top fourth. At this point, the side bent inward with the tops of the ribs showing. This added more volume capacity along with greater side strength. Until this development, most coal hoppers had outside ribs showing.

## Offset 2-bay hoppers from Aristo-Craft

We have two samples here, and a word about each is in order. B&O owned an incredibly large number of twin-hopper cars over the years, coal being a very large part of its business. They had a fine mix of types of construction for these cars, but a large number were the offset-

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Each hopper car is sold separately and includes the removable coal load. The sets of metal wheels are also sold separately, and if you want them, be sure to order them or pick them up at your hobby shop.

side as they were built from around 1937 up to about 1952. The "CAPY" capacity listed for this car is 140,000 pounds and the "LT WT" light (or unloaded) weight is 40,400 pounds. Translated into tons, this is a car that weighs 20.2 tons plus 70 tons of coal for a total gross weight of 90.2 tons on two fifty-ton trucks. That'll work.

The Rio Grande, like so many railroads, didn't ever really own any two-bay coal hoppers. They had MOW hoppers this size with ballast dumps, and they had covered hoppers in the 30-foot range, but their smallest coal hoppers were all triple-bay. That said, we have to understand this is Large Scale, and there are Rio Grande modelers who don't care about that. They will happily buy Rio Grande branded two-bay hoppers and run them around their layout.

The modeling is very good and the measurements are accurate compared to published drawings. There are a number of variants, so don't be surprised if you run across drawings that don't agree with the model. They ranged from thirty to thirty-four feet in length, for example. Across the strikers — the most common location of measurement — this car came out to 33-feet 2.75-inches. The lasting impression is this car is properly proportioned in all dimensions and looks very authentic, just what we want.

The handrails are very fine, as they would be on the prototype. We have all the appropriate plumbing on the B-end. The coal load looks about right for industrial grade; home delivery would be much smaller. The coal load comes out and we can see

the hopper bays underneath, and so you could model a gravel load which would consume only perhaps a half of the load area.

The bay doors are spring loaded shut but can be opened for whatever reason. You can run the cars with the coal loads off, since by definition these cars spent at least half their lives rolling around empty. I found the cars were weighted very well at just over 36 ounces with the metal wheels installed.

By the way, that's an option you might want to consider. The cars come wearing plastic wheels, but Aristo-Craft offers very nice metal wheels in sets of four axles, enough to do a single car. The Oregon Pine Belt Railway's tariffs require nothing but metal wheels, and so we took up this option. Not only does this improve the rolling charac-

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Here's the B&O getting new wheels. I find it easier to change them if I remove the truck first. Also visible is the landing site for Kadee 830 couplers running from the bolster to the end frame.

teristics, this also lowers the center of gravity to a considerable degree.

Lewis Polk and his sons have taken the extra step of creating a landing site for Kadee couplers at each end, and so it takes very little to install 830 body mounts. Remove the trucks, cut the coupler tang off, install the couplers, and put the trucks back on. That's it. The resulting car won't

turn 4-foot diameter curves any more ( $r=2$ ), but it will back very well, which is why body mounts are also specified on the Pine Belt; we back trains a lot!

Forward or backward, these cars are team-players. They'll sit on the bar without stringlining, or they'll take any other place in the train you assign them. The trucks react very well to track ir-

regularities, and I had no derailment problems. If you go to metal wheels, don't throw those plastic wheels away. You can spray paint them a flat, rust brown and use them as wheel loads in one of Aristo's gondolas.

### Final word

Some would feel they needed a long string with a dozen or more of these cars, and certainly behind an Aristo Mallet, that would be a lovely sight, but you can also justify only one or two. In the heyday of this car, coal was still delivered to homes for heating use, and so the local coal company could handle one or two cars, sending out two delivery trucks with ten or twelve tons for delivery. A single car could deliver 70 tons, enough to provide six or seven loads on the delivery truck. How many truckloads a day would that be?

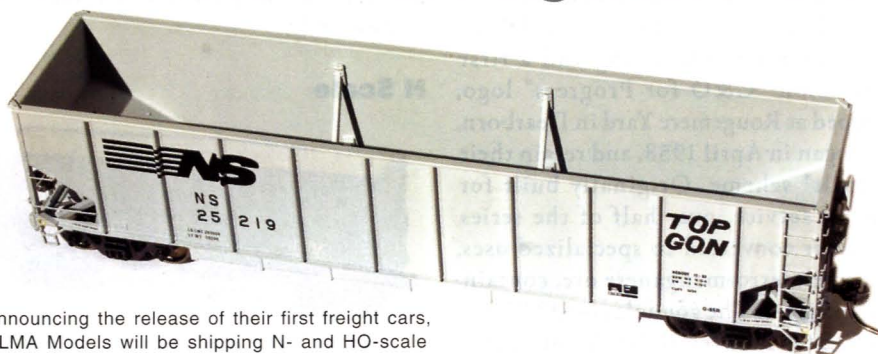
So you get to pick your roadname and then press your cars into service on your railroad as management sees fit. I imagine you'll keep these cars rolling on a regular basis. They are a real treat!



Take a look down inside the hopper bays, and you see just what you would find in the prototype. This was a clever bit of geometry that gave strength while causing the coal to empty out without much restriction. At this point, the Kadees are installed.



# BLMA Models first freight car: Norfolk Southern TopGon



Announcing the release of their first freight cars, BLMA Models will be shipping N- and HO-scale Norfolk Southern TopGons in early 2009. The cars will be offered in three paint scheme variations.

**N & HO** — BLMA Models has announced the release of their first freight car, the Norfolk Southern TopGon. It will be available sometime early in 2009.

The TopGon is one of the most recognizable freight cars on the Norfolk Southern roster, and has been seen in nearly all the corners of the country on all major railroads.

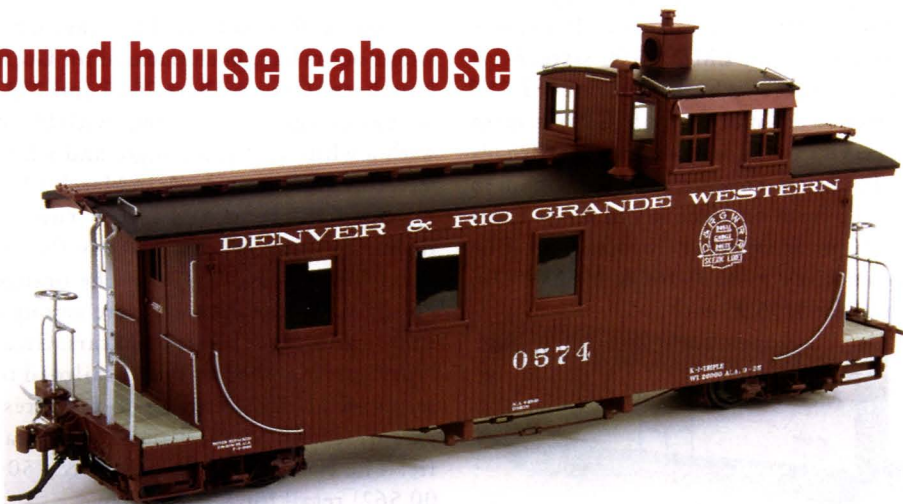
The freight car will be available in three paint scheme variations. The N-scale model will feature fine-scale detail, accurate painting and printing, installed internal bracing, knuckle couplers, prototypical ride height, and the first run will consist of 36 roadnumbers. The cars will retail for \$17.95 each. The HO-scale version will feature separate wire grab irons, accurate painting and printing, installed internal bracing, Kadee #58 scale couplers, metal wheels with 100-ton trucks, etched-metal brake platform, and 36 roadnumbers. The cars will retail for \$25.95 each.

BLMA Models, 16623 Pear Blossom Ct., Whittier, CA 90603; 562-712-7085; E-mail: sales@blmamodels.com; www.BLMAModels.com

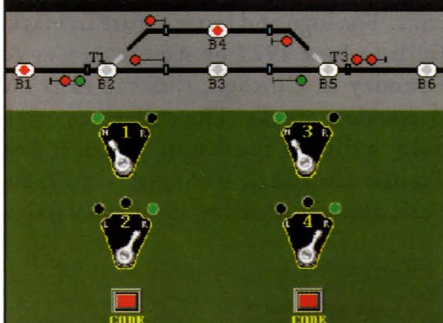
## New D&RGW long round house caboose

**ON3** — San Juan Car Co. has released a new ready-to-run D&RGW long round roof caboose in On3. The caboose features wire grab irons, window glazing, metal wheels, and includes specific detail including four and five rung ladders, roof-mounted marker light, window awnings, and covered windows. The cabooses retail for \$119.95 each.

San Juan Car Co., P.O. Box 1028, Durango, CO 81302; 970-385-5256; Fax: 970-385-1030; E-mail: sanjuancar@frontier.net; www.sanjuancarco.com



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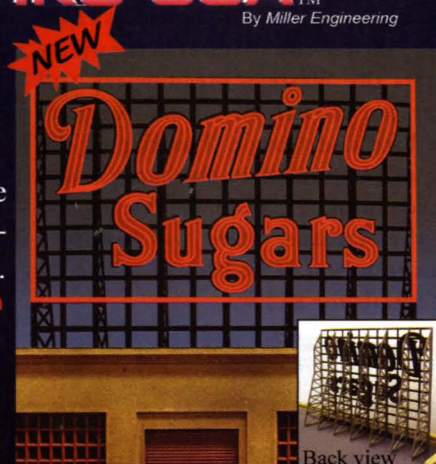
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# New rollingstock from Mico-Trains

**Z, N & NN3** — Micro-Trains has released new rollingstock and two GP-9 locomotives. Among the throng are the eighth car of the Z-scale 50-states car series, and the sixth car of the N-scale presidential car series.

## Z Scale

Two GP-9 locomotives have been released for Amtrak. Numbers 766 and 761 are painted aluminum and black, one with upper black stripe and Amtrak logo and the other with red, white, and blue stripes, and the black Amtrak logo. Lettering is black. An EMD GP9 is a 4-axle diesel locomotive built by General Motors Electro-Motive Division between January 1954 and August 1963. The 3,436 examples of this locomotive model were built for American railroads. Power was provided by an EMD 567C sixteen-cylinder engine, which generated 1,750 horsepower. Many rebuilt GP9s remain in service today with shortline railroads and industrial operators. Some remain in rebuilt form on some major Class I railroads, or as switcher locomotives. The locomotives (#982 01 160 & #982 01 170) retail for \$195.95 each.



A 40-foot standard boxcar with plug door is decorated for Montana. This car is the eighth car of a 50-car series representing each of the 50 states in the union. It bears the Western Meadowlark and Bitterroot flower, Montana's official state bird and flower. The flag of the State of Montana is in the background. The roadnumber, 1889, represents the year the 'Treasure State' was admitted into the union. The boxcar (#502 00 508) retails for \$22.95.



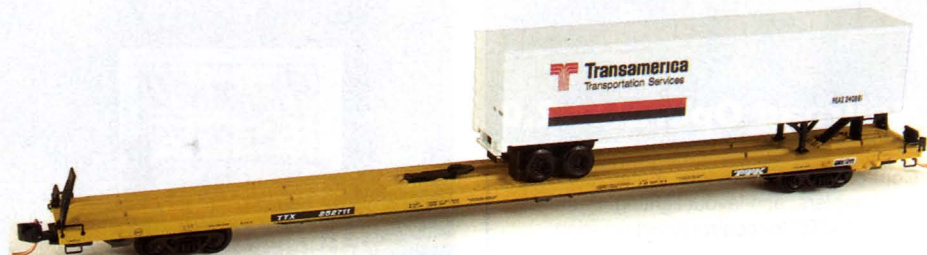
Two 50-foot gondolas with fishbelly sides have been released for Chesapeake & Ohio numbers 31630 and 31636. They are painted black with white logo and lettering, they have drop ends, and scrap loads. The cars were built in April 1952, serviced in April 1958 and run on Roller

Bearing trucks. The gondolas were delivered in the standard early 1950s Railroad Roman lettering and a first generation "C&O for Progress" logo, shipped at Rougemere Yard in Dearborn, Michigan in April 1958, and retain their "as-built" scheme. Originally built for general service, over half of the series was later converted to specialized uses, coil steel, ferro-manganese ore, containers, and glass. The gondolas (#522 00 181 & #522 00 182) retail for \$23.40 each.



Two 40-foot standard boxcars with single doors have been released for Great Northern. Car numbers 2530 and 2533 are painted green and orange with black, with a white and green logo, and white lettering. They were built in March 1948, serviced in April 1944, and run on Roller Bearing trucks. Twenty-five of these box express cars with the orange and green loader schemes were among a 1,000-car order of all steel boxcars. Great Northern was the last major railroad to purchase all-steel boxcars. Box express cars were used for mail and express traffic. The boxcars (#500 00 561 & #500 00 562) retail for \$29.40 each.

Four smoothside passenger cars are now available for Illinois Central. They were manufactured by Pullman Standard for Illinois Central and ran the rails from the 1940s to the 1960s. Originally built for passenger luxury and comfort, many of these cars found their way into maintenance-of-way fleet bunk cars, private corporate, and tourist fleets, as well as speed freight service.



An N-scale 89-foot TOFC flat car with trailer load (TA 240691) has been released for Trailer Train Company. Car TTX 252711 is painted yellow with a black and white logo, and black lettering. It was built in September 1973 by American Car & Foundry and repainted into the 1991 paint scheme. It runs on Barber Roller Bearing trucks. Equipped with hitches and bridge plates, the maximum trailer carrying capacity is 130,000-pounds. The flat car (#071 00 524) retails for \$39.65.

The sleeper car (#550 00 020), dome car (#551 00 020), coach car (#552 00 020), and baggage car (#553 00 020) retail for \$31.80 each.

## N Scale



Two 40-foot drop bottom gondolas have been released for Milwaukee Road. MILW 93118 and 93120 are available with woodchip extension and loads. The gondolas are painted maroon with white logo and lettering. They were built in May 1948, serviced in April 1958, and run on Bettendorf trucks. In April of 1958, Milwaukee Road's Class GS gondolas were fitted with different height extensions to provide a low-cost chip car. This program was developed to address the rapid development of the paper industry in the Pacific Northwest for such uses as Kraft paper and particleboard. The gondolas (#084 00 031 & #084 00 032) retail for \$20.55 each.



A 40-foot double-sheathed wood reefer is now available for Fox River Butter Co. URTC 12301 is painted with reefer yellow sides, and brown roof and ends. The logo and lettering are in black. Built in June 1927 by American Car & Foundry in Chicago, this car runs on Bettendorf trucks. The reefer was originally built for the Union Refrigerator Transit Co., Inc., of Seattle and New York, and was leased to shippers of dairy



products. The reefer (#049 00 590) retails for \$18.65.



A heavyweight depressed-center flat car has been released with a load for Delaware & Hudson. D&H 16159 is painted red with a yellow logo and lettering. It was built in June 1958, serviced in April 1984, and runs on Commonwealth trucks. This was the only depressed-center flat car on the roster for Delaware & Hudson. The company started out as the Delaware and Hudson Canal Company, which built a canal running from Kingston, NY to the anthracite coalfields at Carbondale, PA. The canal company later built one of the first railroads in the United States, later known as the Delaware and Hudson Company and then the Delaware and Hudson Railroad. The flat car (#109 00 080) retails for \$21.55.



A 40-foot standard boxcar with double doors is now available for Great Northern. GN 15466 is painted vermilion red, with a black and white Rocky logo, and white lettering. It was built in March 1940, serviced in April 1963, and runs on National B-1 trucks. Great Northern leased 550 cars from the A.A. Morrison Co. in 1963. As delivered, they were very colorful with vermilion sides, slant serif lettering, and black ends with

stenciled capacity 3720. The boxcar (#023 00 280) retails for \$25.45.



A 40-foot standard boxcar with plug door and no roofwalk is the sixth car of a 44-car series representing each of the presidents of the United States. It bears the portrait of our sixth president, John Quincy Adams. The car comes with a commemorative pin replicated from that era. Adams had two notable careers, separated by a strange interlude. His first was as an American diplomat who rose to become secretary of state. His second was as a member of the House of Representatives and opponent of slavery. The strange interlude was as president of the United States. The boxcar (#074 00 106) retails for \$23.95.



A two-bay Centerflow covered hopper has been released for Norfolk Southern. It is painted gray with a black logo and lettering. It was built in January 2000 by Thrall Car Manufacturing Company and runs on Barber Roller Bearing trucks. NS 294246 was one of 100 cars built for Norfolk Southern, intended for cement service — hence the light gray paint. The hopper (#092 00 240) retails for \$22.35.

A 60-foot extended height boxcar with single door and rivet sides is avail-



able for Grand Trunk Western. GTW 384046 is painted blue with a white logo, and black and white lettering. It was built in January 1966 by Berwick Forge and Fabricating, serviced in March 1985, and runs on Roller Bearing trucks. Appliance Class XL extended height boxcars are equipped with interior side rails and moveable bulkheads for hauling household appliances of high cubic capacity. The boxcar (#104 00 010) retails for \$23.70.

### Nn3 Scale



A 30-foot boxcar with single door has been released for Durango & Silverton. D&SNG 3409 is painted boxcar red with white lettering, and runs on Barber Coleman Arch Bar trucks. The Denver & Rio Grande Railroad established the Silverton Branch in 1881, which became the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad company in 1882 when purchased by William Jackson Palmer. It has been in continuous service since and is today a registered national historic and civil engineering landmark, hauling passengers and freight through the remote wilderness areas between Durango and Silverton, CO. The boxcar (#800 00 050) retails for \$18.40.

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# New rollingstock from Accurail

**HO** — Accurail has released a Northern Pacific 41-foot AAR gondola (#3713), it retails for \$12.98, and is also available in a three number set (#37134) that retails for \$37.98. Also available is a Canadian National 41-foot AAR gondola as a single car (#3714) that retails for \$12.98, or a three number set (#37144) that retails for \$37.98; a Northern Pacific (#3803) 40-foot combo door AAR boxcar, for \$12.98; an Erie Lackawanna (#3535) 40-foot single door AAR boxcar, for \$12.98; and a Central Vermont (#2416) 55-ton USRA coal hopper, for \$12.98.

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# Kadee releases new PS-1 boxcars, PS-2 hoppers

**HO** — Kadee is offering new PS boxcars and hoppers in HO scale. The models are fully assembled and ready to run. One of the new cars includes an operating cushion underframe. Check with your favorite hobby shop for availability.



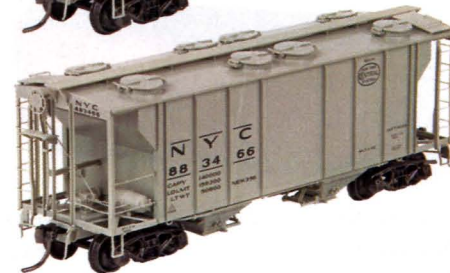
A 40-foot PS-1 boxcar is available for ATSF painted boxcar red with black roof. Number 31597 features "The Route of El Capitan" slogan in white. The car was built in 1950 and features a 6-foot Youngstown door, separately applied details, and Kadee trucks and couplers. The boxcar (#4086) retails for \$31.95.

A Rock Island 50-foot PS-1 boxcar has been released with functioning cushion

underframe and is painted boxcar red with the large white ROCK ISLAND logo and "Cushion Car—A Soft Touch For Freight" slogan on the side. Car 35026 features a 10-foot Youngstown door, separately applied details, and Kadee trucks and couplers. The boxcar (#6318) is sold out on Kadee's web site, but the company says it is still available in hobby shops. The boxcar retails for \$34.95.



Two NYC PS-2 2-bay hoppers are available with notched roof hatch covers. Built in 1956, the channel ribside hoppers are painted Alkali Resisting light gray with the circle New York Central System logo in the upper right-hand



corner and NYC and roadnumbers 883459 (#8644) and 883466 (#8645) in large lettering on the left and end of the cars. The hoppers retail for \$42.95 each.

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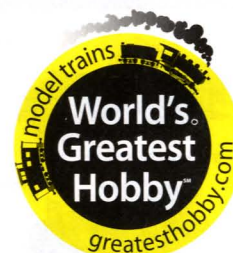
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| 47814 C S X                        | GP-38-2 49237 UNION PACIFIC  | SD-60M | 49601 ERIE LACKAWANNA          | T-M   | 49692 SOUTHERN                  | SD-35  |
| 48691 NORFOLK SOUTHERN             | GP40-2 49279 SOUTHERN        | RS-11  | 49603 LACKAWANNA               | T-M   | 49896 OR 49897 NORFOLK SOUTHERN | GP-38  |
| 48769 SOUTHERN PACIFIC             | 8-40B 49284 CONRAIL          | SD-60M | 49631 JERSEY CENTRAL           | T-M   | 50815 SANTA FE                  | GP-7   |
| 48862 B N S F                      | 8-40BW 49293 UNION PACIFIC   | SD-60M | 49632 OR 49633 SOUTHERNPACIFIC | T-M   | 53598 UNION PACIFIC             | GP40-2 |
| 49102 OR 49103 BURLINGTON NORTHERN | SD-60 49357 SEABOARD SYSTEM  | SD-50  | 49636 VIRGINIAN                | T-M   | 54464 OR 54465 SOUTHERN         | SD-24  |
| 49104 OR 49105 C N W               | SD-60 49363 SOUTHERN PACIFIC | SD-50  | 49663 PENNSYLVANIA             | T-M   | 54467 UNION PACIFIC             | SD-24  |
| 49114 NORFOLK SOUTHERN             | SD-60 49474 SOUTHERN RR      | SD-35  | 49688 PENNSYLVANIA             | SD-35 | 54493 UNION PACIFIC             | SD-24  |

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# USA Uncorks Docksider

"Tiny" loco unveils new "Sync-Ro-Sound" system

Review and Photos by John Sipple

"Docksider" 0-6-0T steam locomotive, MSRP: \$749.95

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## Of Docksiders and Tank Engines

Two fundamental design principles led to the small tank switcher. First came the reality that if the entire weight of the locomotive — including fuel and water — was on the driver wheels, this would give a maximum amount of traction. Second, with only four or six drivers on the track, this locomotive could go around very tight turns where other locomotives would be challenged to go.

The areas around the docks along the Atlantic Coast were home to very built-up

| By-The-Numbers               |      |           |
|------------------------------|------|-----------|
| 0-6-0T Docksider             |      |           |
| USA Trains                   |      |           |
| LSA 1:29 • Type: Steam       |      |           |
| Traction Tires? No           |      |           |
| Pull Power (Ozs @ Full Slip) |      |           |
| Pull ÷ Loco Wt = Efficiency  |      |           |
| 73.6                         | 170  | 43.3%     |
| Volts                        | Amps |           |
| 18                           | 2.5  |           |
| Analog DC                    |      |           |
| Start Volts = 8.5            |      |           |
| Volts                        | Amps | Scale MPH |
| 12                           | 0.61 | 4.3       |
| 15                           | 0.65 | 16.6      |
| 20                           | 0.71 | 32.3      |

development, and tracks ducked into warehouses and scooted around tight curves. Any locomotive that could get into and out of these tight confines was often referred to as a "Docksider," and many of them plied the wharfs and docks.

But not all of them. The Docksider was also a prized industrial locomotive. Many industries all over America's vast rail system employed small tank locos as switchers. Their known weaknesses had to do with coal and water range tied together with a limited speed capability. They customarily had small drivers that limited top speed along with the lack of leading and trailing trucks to assist them around curves. These were machines for yards and service spurs, not out on the mainline.

The Leetonia & Cherry Valley railroad operated in Eastern Ohio, connecting the beehive coke ovens of the area with the nearby Pennsylvania as well as

the Erie railroads. L&CV #1 is the exact prototype example of our 0-6-0T model, but let's be clear. This was not a unique prototype; Alco produced many others either alike or similar enough. L&CV #1 was built in 1910, had 44-inch drivers, and weighed in at 55 tons. As such, it probably had a top safe speed of 40 miles per hour or less. From my research, it would seem that the L&CV was part of the M. A. Hanna company that owned and operated various mining and production facilities, the Leetonia coke furnaces being one of them. Equipped with Stephenson Valve Gear and slide valves, it lacked superheating, making it both inexpensive to purchase but also somewhat more expensive to operate.

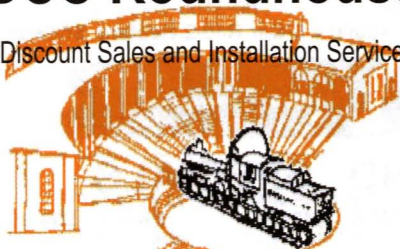
## USA's Docksider

I can't begin to tell you how much research I did into M. A. Hanna, L&CV, the small town of Leetonia and the Cherry Valley area of Ohio only to find out for certain that the railroad indeed operated here and very little else. Small wonder USA Trains didn't produce a version lettered for this small shortline. They have produced others, however, and our sample arrived wearing Pennsylvania Railroad markings.

We might as well face the facts that garden railroaders are often not burdened with the need to be prototypically exact, so the fact that Pennsy didn't own an exact copy of this locomotive is relatively unimportant. There have been other copies in other scales of this very model because the plans are still accessible, and a company would go broke trying to conform to each roadname, especially when some railroads never operated any 0-6-0T types. What I can say is this model is a very faithful reproduction of the L&CV #1.

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This husky little brute can muscle good cuts of cars up grades, both in the prototype and in this 1:29-scale model. Mainly constructed of diecast parts, it puts ten pounds of weight on the tracks and over 4-1/2 pounds on the bar.

First, the main modeling medium is die-cast metal which is sharply detailed and wonderfully heavy. The result is a model with a great deal of pull while possessing great authenticity. It is a saddle-tank version, the locomotive offered with either that or side tanks for water as a production option. A very similar locomotive was built by Alco in 1929 with side tanks and a weight of 66 tons for Michigan Northern Power, so these locos were constructed over a period of some twenty years.

The locomotive's skyline is interesting because it tells an important story. The headlight, stack, and bell are located atop the smoke box. The saddle tank then runs the length of the boiler behind the smoke box, sporting a

sand dome, a steam dome, a water filler hatch, and another sand dome. The dual sand domes spoke of prodigious sand usage, required when starting strings of cars in hilly country.

Handrails and other separately-applied details give the model a certain richness of appearance. It's a sharp-looking locomotive with glazed windows in the cab and sliding cab side windows. A crew inhabits the cab and the backhead shows detail to it. Paint is a satiny-smooth black, and the lettering is crisply rendered. The pilot support rods are metal, as are the lubrication pipes to the top of the valve chests. The cut bar on the front pilot is metal and can be lifted, though it isn't connected to the coupler.

The coal load is very convincing in

its little bunker behind the cab. The fireman would be able to shovel the coal from a coal door on the bottom of the bunker and right into the firebox, though much of that would be up to your imagination. If you lift the coal load, you will find underneath the four operating switches, "Smoke," "Motor," "Lights," and "Sound."

The running gear is all metal, with the side rods and main rods working smoothly with the valve gear. The crosshead slides easily on the crosshead guide, though I added a touch of white grease to ease movement and reduce wear and friction. Stephenson valve gear is simple and fun to watch while also being prototypically correct for this locomotive.

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The photo I saw of the Leetonia & Cherry Valley #1 was of the left side but essentially was identical to this machine — except it was the prototype! This is clearly the work of master model builders.

### Running the Docksider

A lot of operational advantages have been added to this machine, starting with the stainless steel tires on the wheels. Not only does this give the model a very nice appearance, the stainless steel is impervious to the electric arc pitting that damages plated wheels. Stainless steel also possesses greater adhesion, especially on stainless steel rails. Small wonder this compact powerhouse weighed in at 10 pounds 10 ounces and pulled a whopping 4 pounds 9.6 ounces for a tractive efficiency of 43.3 percent!

The 73.6 ounces of pull places this baby in the upper echelon of pullers, especially for locomotives without

traction tires. The loco also doesn't use track sliders. The Pine Belt is limited to 18-foot trains, in large part due to storage restrictions but also because curves on grades lead to stringlining. Besides, I found that only a handful of locomotives can handle a train that long by themselves. While the rolling resistance at the most difficult points of the journey can exceed 60 ounces on most of the trains, it generally requires at least that much and possibly more pull on the bar to get a train up and around Maiktha Grade.

A string of old-time cars eighteen-feet long comes to something like 10 to 12 of them. If this model had been restricted to the prototype's approximately 20 per-

cent tractive efficiency around 15 degree curves on a curve adjusted 5.2 percent grade, I doubt that it could have handled more than five or six loaded cars. With more than double the traction, the Docksider had no trouble with this train.

The smallish wheelbase is offset to some degree by the superior pickup of the stainless steel traction tires. All small wheelbase locomotives in track powered service will have some problems when running into dead spots or dirty track, but this model is better than most, also in part due to the six-wheel drive over a four-wheel version.

In operation, I found the long overhang when running in reverse could

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One advantage of tank locos is they operated in reverse as well as they did in forward. If you discover the rear footboards drag on the track, a screw on each side removes that footboard for safe-keeping. Under the coal load, you'll find the control switches.

find one of the footboards digging into the rail if there was a change in grade. I would advise running very carefully in reverse until it is determined that this won't happen. The other issue that complicated things are the couplers. USA Trains uses a very nice operating knuckle coupler that is a full head low, so it won't work at all with a Kadee, which is the Pine Belt's standard. In times gone by, USA has made mounting Kadee couplers a very easy business, but the Dockside doesn't offer that facility.

Attempting to do a quick hack didn't work, so it was time to take the Dockside out to visit Sam Clarke at Kadee Quality Products. In this case, we'd be working directly with the diecast frame, and that would require both care and precision. We ended up drilling and tapping a hole at each end, allowing us to mount 837 types. The drill work was done by a machinist with an industrial drill press.

Nothing in the manual included with the locomotive indicated it was in any way DCC-ready, and a close examina-

tion confirmed that. For that reason, I treated this model as Analog DC Only and went from there. The model does feature both directional lights plus a proprietary sound system dubbed, "Sync-Ro-Sound," the "Ro" being in honor of the father-son Ro family that owns USA Trains and Charles Ro Supply.

The sound system is an honest attempt to bring affordable sound with a good set of features to this product. Right away, I could tell that the chuff sound was electronically-generated as opposed to being a played-back sample of a real steam locomotive. Playback systems are far more complex to engineer, and that makes them expensive to design and manufacture. Unfortunately, I have yet to hear an electronically generated sound system that was actually believable, and this one is no exception.

On the other hand, we have to appreciate what is being offered here. Yes, many of us know the complexities of steam sound, with pumps banging, air let-offs, grease-guns chattering, coal being shoveled, musical whistles, and breathy chuffs, but as we stand around and watch some small train pull around a string of cars, any sound system energizes the kids, and many of the older folks really have no idea if this is accurate or not. And if you really don't like the sound effect, you can switch it off.

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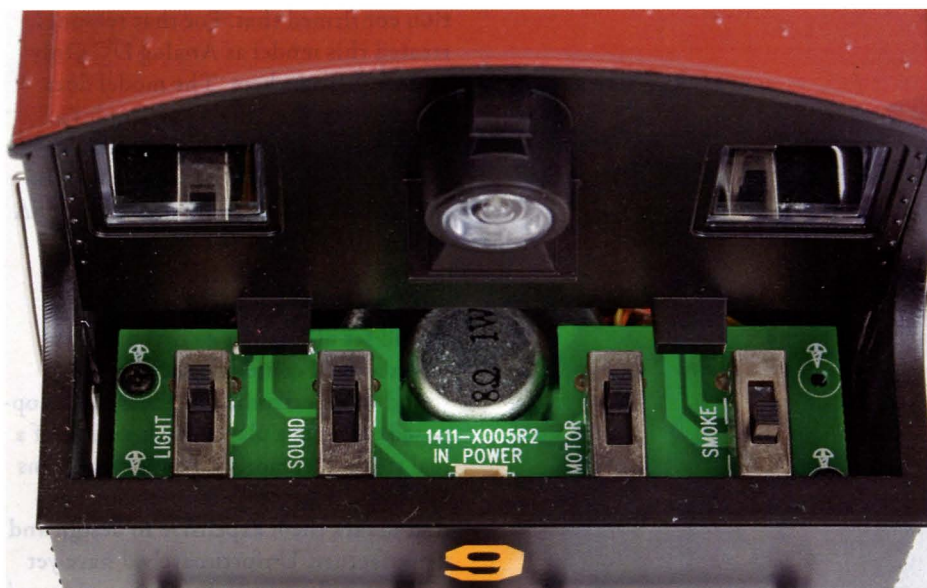
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And this is what's under the coal load. From left to right, the switches are labeled, "Light," "Sound," "Motor," and "Smoke." You can also see the magnet on the sound system speaker.

holds the magnet off-center, and if one is set up on the engineer's side, a reed switch in the belly of the loco will blow the whistle as it passes over the magnet. On the fireman's side, that reed switch rings the bell. This is a very simple and reliable method that requires no special wiring or expensive DCC or radio control systems to activate.

The bell and whistle both seem to be sampled sounds and are quite good. The whistle plays a set grade crossing call with two longs, a short, and a long. The bell is a nice clanger that goes along for about five seconds. The magnets worked very well but sometimes jumped up and clung to one set of wheels in the train that are made of ferritic steel. Since most metal wheels aren't attractive to magnets, this isn't a

large problem. You should also know that when a magnet starts one sound, a sound that is playing will be stopped.

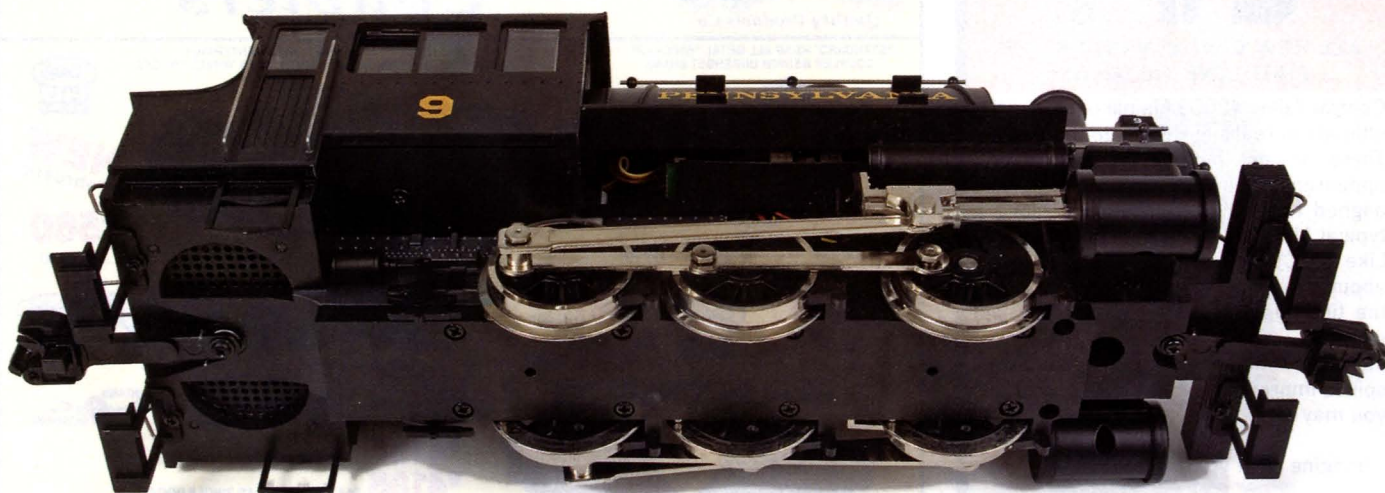
The lights are LEDs and operate from a constant lighting circuit inside, and this means they don't come on until at least a minimum level of power is reached. In our sample, that translates to around 12 volts, though the little switcher would start rolling at lower voltages, and much below ten volts saw irregular operation. At 12 volts, I got a good, steady 4.3 scale miles per hour (using 1:29). If we used 1:24 scale, that would be 3.5 smph. A top speed of around thirty is excellent for this type of locomotive, and it is very stable, in large part due to its heavy weight.

It should be noted that USA Trains

has an entire line of old-time wooden-type cars that would be perfect behind this loco. In addition to their fantastic assortment of billboard reefers, they have added outside framed versions. The same is true for boxcars with wood sides and outside-braced types. They have a wood caboose along with a complete line of four different types of Overton passenger cars. Not to be forgotten is their ore cars, Maintenance of Way work train, and their army train, all of which would be right at home behind the Docksider.

I would consider the Docksider to be a 1:29 "A" Scale locomotive, but it looks fine with the somewhat-larger 1:24 "H" scale old-time cars produced by USA Trains and others. In real life, while this was small beside the really big locos of 1910, by itself it was actually rather large. Whether placed with A or H, the model is a reasonable match. With G and F scales, it's obviously too small. It looked fine to me sitting next to 1:24 scale buildings, however.

This is a remarkable little puller, a well-executed model, and a solid concept. The "Sync-Ro-Sound" system is in its first iteration and has plenty of room to grow. Charlie Ro is to be applauded for working toward a sound system that is easy-to-use, inexpensive, and factory-installed. The Ro family has a restless quest for excellence, and so I'm sure they'll continue to seek improvement for this fledgling sound system while holding the line on ease, price, and installation. The model is sure to be popular with visitors to the Pine Belt, and I expect it to get a lot of work.



This underbelly shot reveals the speaker port under the cab, and it also shows the coupler mounts. As is very clear, the drivers sport no rubber traction tires, and there are no track sliders, either. Stainless steel wheel tires not only give this loco superior traction, they also resist getting pits from power arcing.



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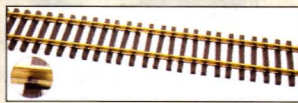


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# New rollingstock roadnumbers from Intermountain

HO — Intermountain has released two EMD F7A and F7B locomotives, four new U18B locomotives, a 4750 cubic foot three-bay hopper, six Santa Fe refrigerator cars in new roadnumbers, two Maxi IV stack cars, a 19,600 gallon tank car, and five NE-5 cabooses.



Two EMD F7A and F7B locomotives have been re-released. Northern Pacific (#49014 & #49514) are painted to match the locomotives EMD delivered to the Northern Pacific for freight service starting in May 1951. They are black with broad yellow stripes and the "Northern Pacific" is spelled out in block lettering on the A-unit, it is available in the following roadnumbers: 6012A, 6012D, 6015A, and 6015D. The B-unit features the script "Main Street of the Northwest" slogan and is available for roadnumbers 6012B, 6012C, 6015B, and 6015C.

Western Maryland (#49076 & #49576) is painted black with yellow "speed" lettering. The A-unit is available for roadnumbers 54, 57, 60, and 63, and the B-unit is available for roadnumbers 55B, 57B, 61B, and 65B. They are completely assembled with wire grabs, etched metal grilles, prototype specific details, and Kadec couplers. The smooth drive is available either as DCC-ready with the 8-pin NMRA-compatible socket on the PC board or with a QSI sound system that will operate on

DC or DCC. The A-units retail for \$99.95, or \$169.95 with sound, and the B-units retail for \$94.95, or \$164.95 with sound.



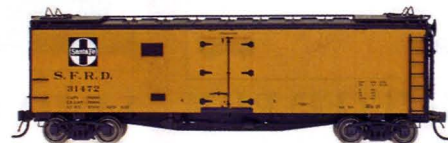
Four new U18B locomotives are now available, and are available in four roadnumbers unless stated otherwise. The U18B was the eight-cylinder, branch line road switcher, manufactured by GE in 1973-1975. Maine Central (#49451) is decorated in the harvest gold and dark green colors, with the gold eagle image on the nose. It is available for numbers 400, 405, 406, and 409. Providence & Worcester (#49455) is decorated in the brown and orange scheme with white striping lettering, and is available in one roadnumber, 1801.

Seaboard Coast Line (#49461) is painted in the original black scheme with yellow striping. The multiple headlight system of the prototype is on the model. It is available for roadnumbers 324, 326, 338, and 340. CSX (#49477) is decorated in the gray, blue, and yellow colors of bright future scheme. It is available for roadnumbers 1932, 1934, 1938, and 1950. The models have finely molded details and laser sharp lettering. Each unit is equipped with etched metal grilles and radiator selections, wire grab irons, and coupler lift bars. The smooth DC drive is DCC-compatible with the NMRA 8-pin socket. The locomotives retail for \$139.95.



A 4750 cubic foot three-bay hopper has been released in new roadnumbers

for Santa Fe (#45311). The numbers are the following: 315278, 315314, 315493, 315507, 315676, and 315759. Painted mineral brown with white lettering, this car features metal wheelsets, etched metal roofwalks, and Kadec couplers. It retails for \$29.95.



Six Santa Fe refrigerator cars have been re-released for the following: *Super Chief* (#460109) - RR32 in the Ship & Travel scheme for roadnumbers 31675, 31902, 32385, 32541, 32869, and 33116; *El Capitan* (#46112) - RR27 in the curved line map scheme for roadnumbers 34806, 34814, 34836, 34855, 34873, and 34881; *Grand Canyon* (#46114) - RR32 in the straight line map scheme for roadnumbers 35516, 35524, 35541, 35563, 35579, and 35597; *Texas Chief* (#46115) - RR28 in the ship and travel scheme for roadnumbers 35005, 35022, 35038, 35051, 35073, and 35084; no slogan (#46117) - RR21 for roadnumbers 34031, 34118, 34175, 34247, 34352, and 34423; and *The Scout* (#46118) - RR32 in the straight line map scheme for roadnumbers 35604, 35621, 35640, 35667, 35673, and 35694. The cars retail for \$29.95.

Two Maxi IV stack cars are now available. These models are articulated three-car sets, each car will accept up to 53-foot containers. AOK (#47353) 55006, 55068, 55105, 55321; and IAIS (#47354) 55014, 55137, 55268, 55335 are detailed for the early version cars in oxide red with super fine white lettering. The cars are equipped with metal wheelsets and Accurail scale-

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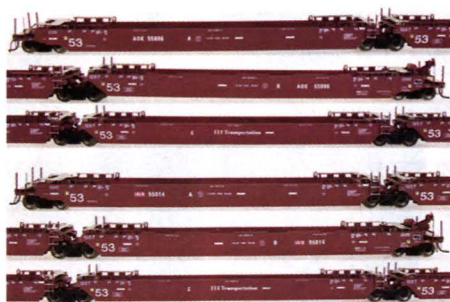
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size knuckle couplers. They are available in four roadnumbers, and retail for \$89.95 per three-car set.

A 19,600 gallon tank car has been re-



leased in new roadnumbers for GATX (#47810). The roadnumbers are the following: 71728, 71731, 71734, 71739, 71742, and 71748. It is painted black with white lettering, and comes equipped with numerous fine metal etching, wire handrails, metal wheelsets, and Accurail scale-size couplers. The tank car retails for \$32.95.



Five NE-5 cabooses are now available for the following: Chicago Great Western (#CCS1211- shown) painted maroon with gold lettering and the orange "Lucky Strike" herald for roadnumbers 600, 604, 609, and 612; Penn Central (#CCS1223)

is painted green with white lettering for roadnumbers 19825, 19846, 19864, and 19882; Chicago Great Western (#CCS1224) is yellow and green for roadnumbers 10500, 10506, and 10507; Lamoille Valley (#CCS1225) is painted yellow with the lettering in green and a black roof for roadnumber 200; and Boston & Maine (#CCS1226) is painted a dark boxcar red while the ends are a bright caboose red, with the Minuteman herald in white for roadnumbers C-3, C-6, C-42, and C-45. The cars feature etched metal running boards, wire grab irons, metal wheelsets, and Kadee couplers. They retail for \$49.95 each.

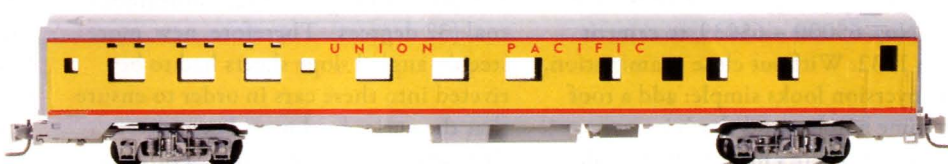
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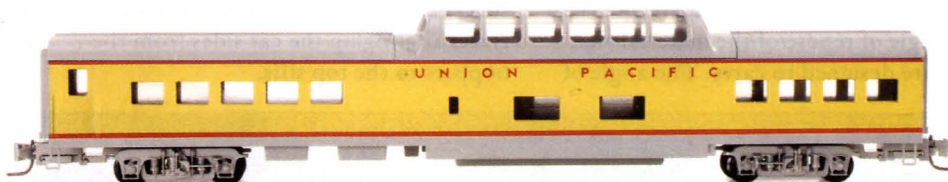
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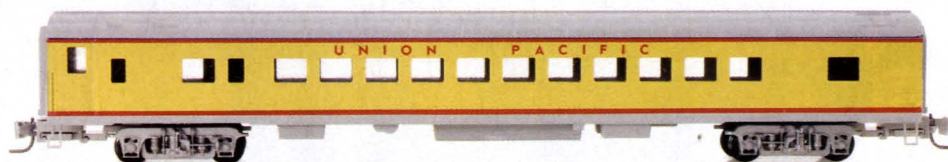
### Coming Paint Schemes



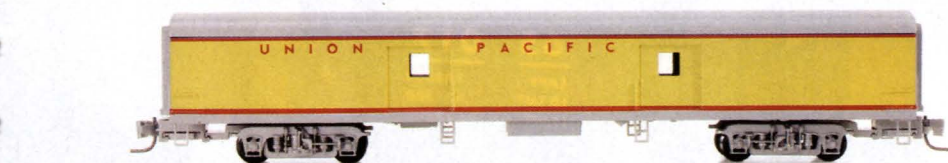
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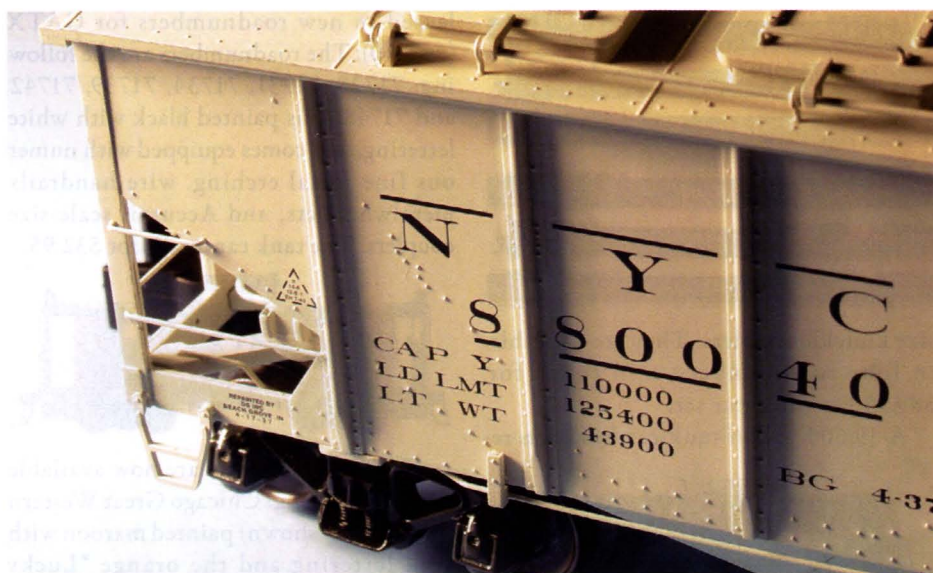
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**T**HESE unique cars started out as USRA 65000-series open-top coal carriers. The Central Railroad of New Jersey (CNJ) converted forty of them, Nos. 65000 – 65039, to cement cars in 1932. Without close examination, the conversion looks simple: add a roof with some hatches and that's it.

However, there's more to it: in order to function properly, hopper cars have slope sheets that are slightly steeper than the angle of repose of the material that they are designed to carry. The angle of



This close-up of the NYC-decorated version of the car shows the extra diagonal row of rivets that indicate the presence of the second after-market slope sheet.

repose is the slope the material naturally assumes when poured from a single point into a pile. If a slope sheet is not as steep as the angle of repose, the material will not clear out of the car completely. It so happens that cement has a higher angle of repose (40 degrees) than bituminous coal (32 degrees). Therefore, new, more steeply-angled slope sheets had to be riveted into these cars in order to ensure that the entire load would completely clear with the hoppers open. The only exterior signs of these two added slope sheets are four extra diagonal rows of rivets angling up the car sides from the hoppers to the top sills.

## The Model

S Helper's cement car nicely replicates the added rivets. The eight rectangular roof hatches, which actually open, are detailed with hinges and grabs on top and rivets on their undersides. With the first and last pair of hatches open, you can even see the interior lateral bracing. Roof detailing includes the rodding that locks the hatches in transit.

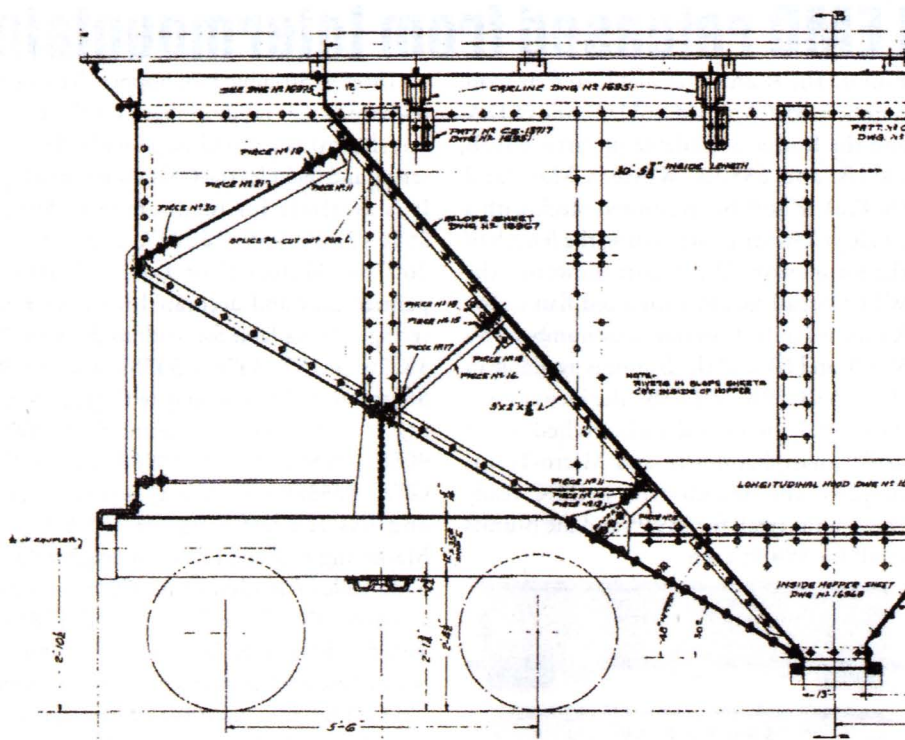
As with all S Helper Service cars, grab irons and roofwalk handholds are fabricated from steel wire, individually applied. Brake rodding, piping, and the train air line at the bottom of one side are also modeled.



S Helper Service's black CNJ hopper car looks like the utilitarian workhorse it is. It should fit right in on any freight-oriented model railroad. The NMRA-

standard wheelsets, included with the car, have been installed. Kadee #802 couplers, purchased separately, have also been installed.





### For the Scale Modeler

The box also contains four wheelsets conforming to NMRA/NASG standards. It takes only a few minutes for the modeler to replace the AF-compatible

wheelsets with these. Once the trucks are removed to replace the wheelsets, the AF-compatible couplers drop right off. Cored coupler-mounting pads, molded into the ends of the center sill, match the screw holes in Kadee No. 802/808 couplers as well as SHS's own Kadee-compatible couplers (Part No. 01295). The packaging also includes an extra set of four corner stirrup steps in matching paint, eight screws for mounting Kadee or SHS Kadee-compatible couplers, and truck and coupler-box shims designed to achieve correct NMRA coupler height above the rails.

## Closing Thoughts



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  - Go to our Web site to hear it!
  - **Light the way** with prototypical Rule 17 lighting
  - **Double- or triple-head easily** with any other M.T.H. locomotives, steam or diesel
  - **Record and playback scenes** (sequences of throttle, sound, and lighting commands that you determine)\*\*
  - **Run smoothly at any speed** from 3 scale miles per hour to full throttle, and maintain that speed over varying track conditions with cruise control
  - **Compare favorably** with the detail level and accuracy of any other HO steam engine; USRA Mikes, for example, have details specific to each railroad
- \* requires DCC or M.T.H. DCS system  
 \*\* requires M.T.H. DCS system

\* requires DCC or M.T.H. DCS system  
\*\* requires M.T.H. DCS system

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# Western Maryland EMD released from Intermountain

N — Intermountain has released three new EMD F7A- and F7B-units, and five 4750 cubic foot hoppers. The models are available in six roadnumbers unless otherwise noted.



Three new EMD F7A and F7B-units have been released. The first is decorated for Kansas City Southern (#69258 & #69758) passenger service, with its distinctive red, yellow, and black paint scheme. Both the A- and B-unit are available with two roadnumbers, 32 and 33 for the A-unit, and 32-B and 33-B. Northern Pacific (#69260 & #69760) is decorated for passenger service. It is dark green with a wide medium green band down the side, accented with yellow stripes. The slogan "Main Street of the Northwest" is written in script on the A-unit, while "Northern Pacific" is in block letters on the

B-unit. The A-unit is available in four roadnumbers, 6510A, 6510C, 6511C, and 6512A, and the B-unit is available in three, 6510B, 6511B, and 6550B. Western Maryland (#69261 & #69761) is painted black with a single yellow stripe stretching the length of the locomotive. The A-unit showcases the WM Fireball herald with a red flame. The A-unit is available in four roadnumbers, 54, 57, 60, and 63, and the B-unit is available in three, 53B, 59B, and 63B. The locomotives have finely molded details, etched metal grilles, wire handrails, and Micro-Trains couplers. The smooth drive is DCC-ready. The A-units retail for \$89.95 and the B-units retail for \$84.95 each.



Three 4750 cubic foot hoppers have been released in new roadnumbers. CSX (#65307 not shown) is painted beige with black lettering and includes the CSX underlined logo. It is available for roadnumbers 259326, 259642, 259865, 260217, 260529, and 260704. Mofort Feed Lots (#65316) is painted gray and decorated with black lettering. It is available for roadnumbers 34774, 34776, 34782, 34785, 34789, and 34791. Southern (#65349) is gray with green lettering. It is available for roadnumbers 90867, 90882, 90891, 90954, 90960, and 90983. GTA (#65388 not shown) is painted gray and has red lettering for GTA Grain Marketing with NAHX reporting marks. It is available for roadnumbers 476212, 476214, 478469, 478473, 478505, and 478525. Toledo, Peoria & Western (#65389) is painted red and decorated in white, with the large billboard logo. It is available for numbers 18152, 18159, 18161, 18163, 18174, and 18180. The hoppers come fully assembled with etched metal roofwalks and Micro-Trains trucks and couplers.

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## New limited covered hoppers from the Chicago & North Western Historical Society

N & HO — The Chicago & North Western Historical Society has announced the release of their new limited edition 4,750 cubic foot covered hoppers.

One of the final programs of car overhauls performed at C&NW's Clinton IA car shops were the repainting of 98 former CMKX covered hoppers. These 4,750 cubic foot cars were built by Trinity Industries in 1979. The first three of the cars released under this program (#471713, #471783, and #471796) had the large CNW applied to the sides of cars. The remaining cars done under this program did not have the CNW applied to their sides, making these three cars unique.

These ready-to-run models were



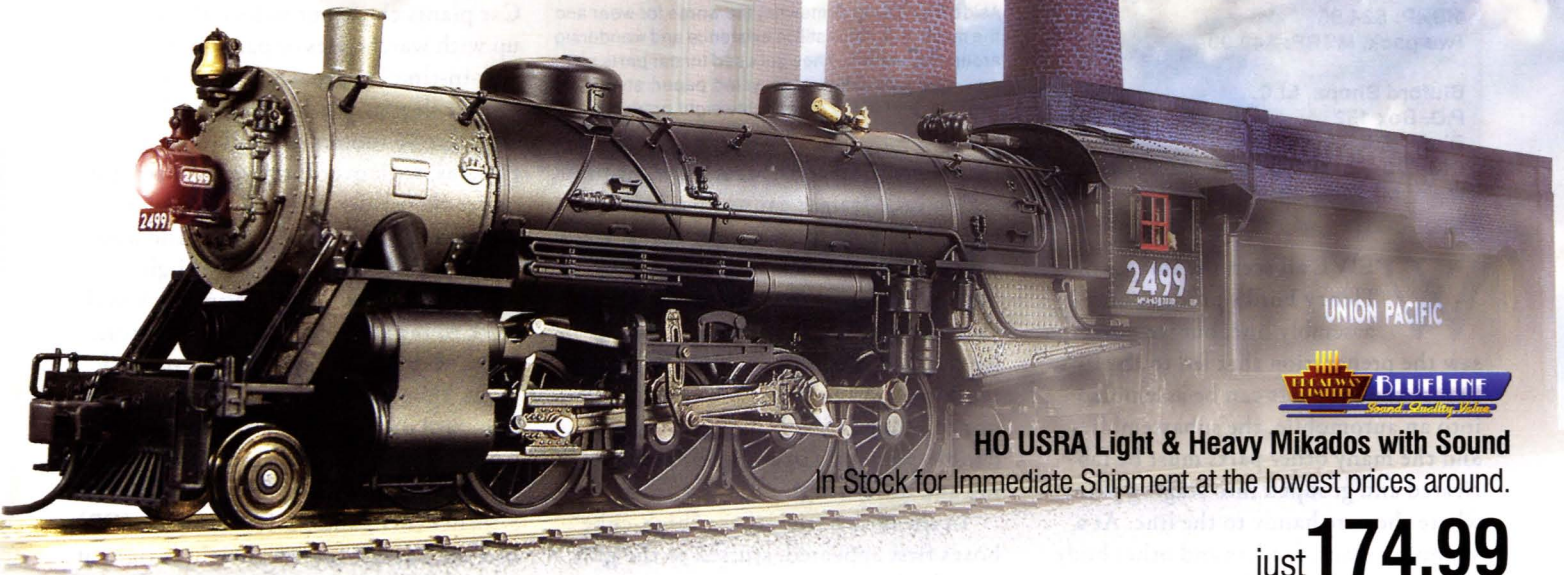
produced for the Society by Intermountain, and includes Kadec couplers, metal roof walks, and metal wheels. They are available in three numbers only.

Individual HO cars are available for \$30.00 each, with the complete HO set of 3 cars available for \$80.00. Individual N-scale cars are available for \$22.00 each, with the complete N-scale set of three cars available for \$60.00. Include \$7.00 postage with each order.

Chicago & North Western Historical Society, P.O. Box 1068, North Riverside, IL 60546; [www.cnwhs.org](http://www.cnwhs.org)

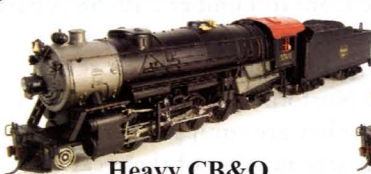


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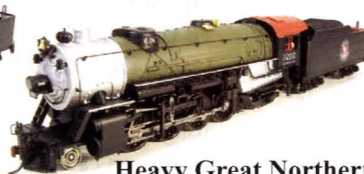
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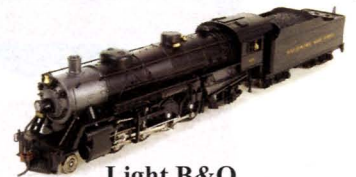
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# Auto boxcars debut from Bluford Shops

*Illinois company starts new chapter in manufacturing*

*Review and Photos by John Sipple*

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**W**E'VE all seen the images of Henry Ford's production assembly line, but we never saw the preparation that led to the line. Before the car parts can be assembled into an automobile, the subassemblies and the many other parts must be fabricated and grouped into staging points where they are handy to the line. At a stamping plant, fenders and other body parts would be pounded out of huge coils of sheet steel. Then they would be piled on special racks and loaded onto freight cars for the trip to the automobile assembly plant.

The problem with this scenario is that a stack of fenders is still mostly air because they are kept apart from each other. An entire sixty-foot boxcar full of

Aside from being somewhat the worse for wear and the miles, this car is still in existence and wandering around the nation. They get used for car parts even now, and haul bales of recycled paper, styrofoam packing, and many other lightweight products.

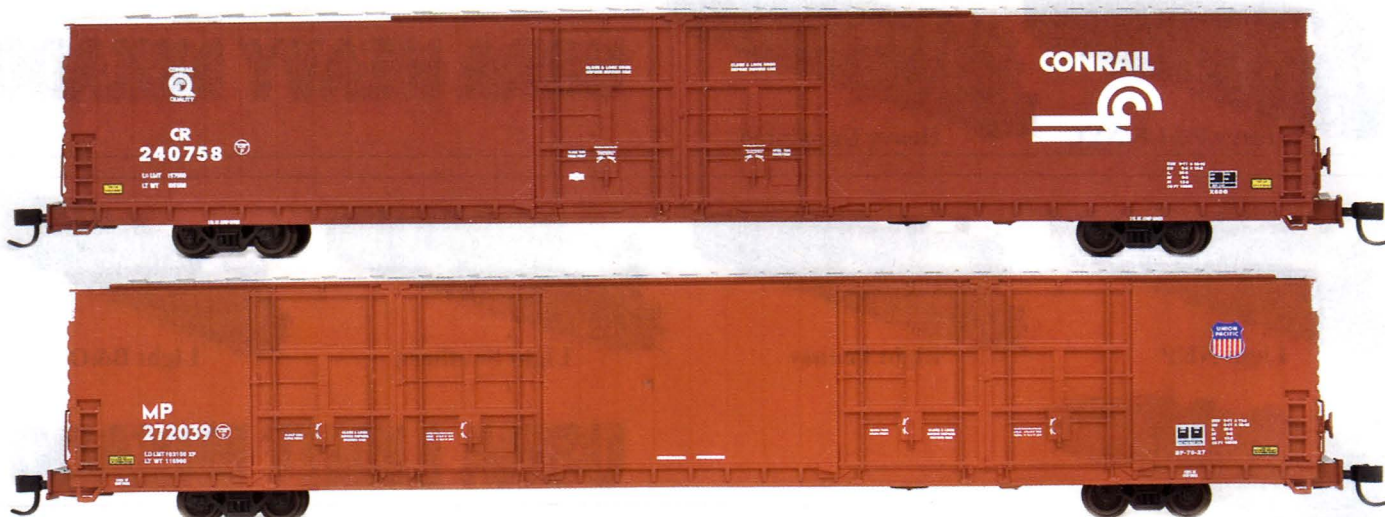
them hardly taxed the truck weight limit, and so each freight car was partially wasted. The solution was to start with a regular set of trucks and put a really big box on top of that. Railroads were routinely hauling cars over ninety feet in length, and they had over-height boxcars reaching seventeen feet in height, so why not combine both of these with huge, double-plug door opening for faster loading and unloading?

In the mid-sixties, these "high-cube" boxes first appeared, stuffed to the gills with fenders, doors, frames, and other mass-produced car parts. At the other end of the line, huge warehouses accepted these new parts and then meted them out to the assembly line as needed. After twenty years, this fleet started seeing less usage for a complex number of reasons. Imported cars were doing away with some of the national car manufacturing.

Car plants chose not to load themselves up with warehouses of parts, preferring a "just-in-time" approach. This shifted a lot of part shipping to highway trucks.

A few 86 footers are still in use to this day, with over forty years of service under their belts. Virtually all major railroads owned some of them and also used them for paper and other lightweight products, often getting backhaul work to make their use a shipping steal. Most of the main car makers produced them, though our samples are Pullman-Standard products. The 86-foot 6-inch length was an inside measure; the length across coupler pulling faces was 93-foot 8-inches (MP) and 92-foot 8-inches (CR), and the outside extreme height is right at 17 feet. These were cushion underframe cars with a standard 20-inch travel.

The Conrail number 240758 is part of a seventeen-car assigned service block (as of January 2001) working on the Norfolk Southern. Designated as X60, they are equipped for pallets. A large number of these cars have remained in their Conrail logos and



Use the trucks, which are fairly standard freight trucks, for scale, and you suddenly can vision how huge are these boxes! They sit low, stick up high,

have a considerable overhang, and you can eat a sandwich as you walk from one truck to the next. Now pack it full of Ford or Chevy fenders.



roadnumbers. Built in 1967, it hit its 40th birthday in 2007.

Missouri Pacific number 272039 was built back in 1966 and became Union Pacific property when MP was absorbed into the UP System. Unlike the Conrail versions that retained their markings and numbers, the MP versions were renumbered. UP has quite a fleet of the Big Boxes still in service. Some of the quad doors are still in operation, using MP numbers and looking like our sample.

## A new company

Bluford Shops went into full-time manufacturing of model railroad products in January 2008, their name taken from the location of their business in Bluford, Illinois and the Bluford Yards on the Illinois Central. It's now operated by Canadian National, but BNSF has trackage rights with NS operating in the vicinity. Sounds like a good place to chase trains!

This new company's flagship release is their 86-foot high-cube boxcars, available as both two-door openings (one on each side) and quad-door openings. Each door opening is 20 feet wide and 12 feet tall and has dual ten-foot plug doors. The first batch of cars includes Conrail, MoPac, and Grand Trunk Western. The second batch includes NS, ATSF, and Milwaukee. The ConRail, MoPac, NS, and ATSF versions are also available in a two-roadnumber two pack.

Most of the detail on these cars is molded on, which doesn't hurt them at all. The mold work is excellent, so the plug doors and side grabs are convincing. The brakeman's step over the coupler is a separately applied, see-through metal delight, and the brake wheel is also separate.

Paintwork is superb and authentic, adding considerably to the appearance of the cars. The white band at the top of each end is there to remind train crews that it is that much taller than Plate C clearances, something you should also consider on your own layout. The sides of the cars are a good read, if you bring a high power magnifier! Don't be surprised if you have a photo of one of these cars that shows a different placement of various text; shopping moved some of this around at times.

The underside is nominally detailed; unless you plan to pose the car head down in a ditch, this is good opera-



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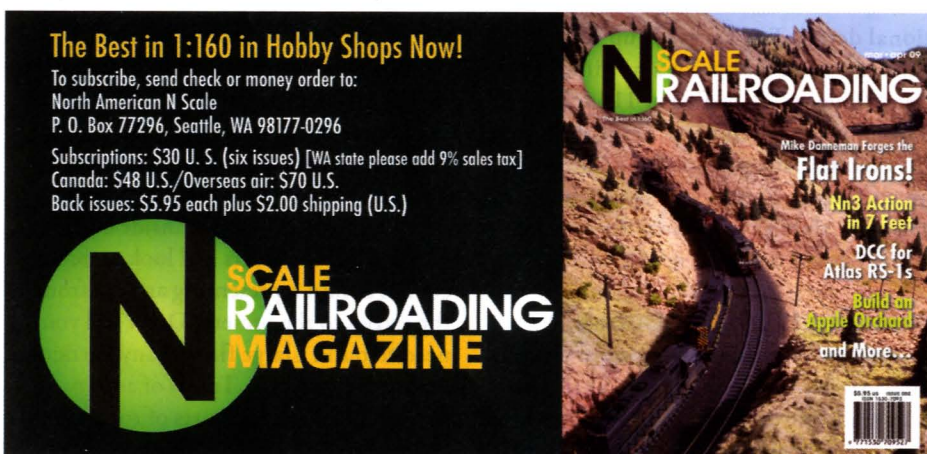
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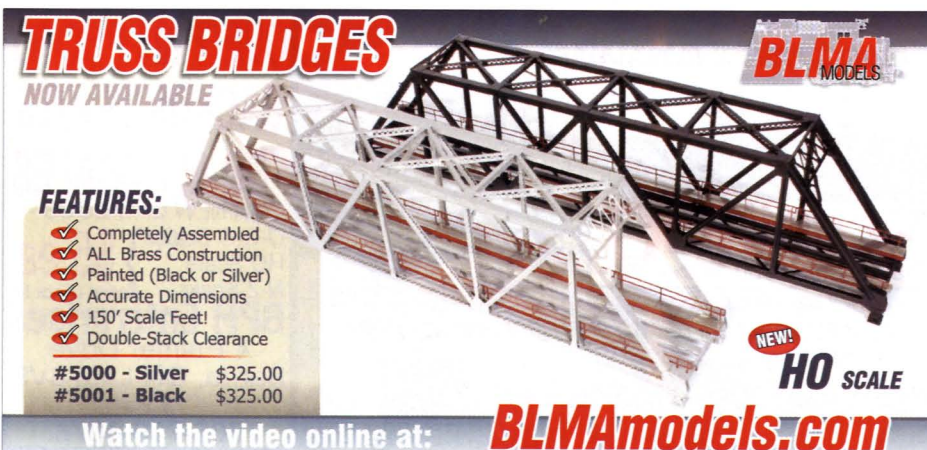
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Our two samples found themselves rounding an 11-inch radius curve. They not only overhang on the end, they also cut across the curve in

the middle of the car, but they stay inside the top of the roadbed on Kato Unitrack. Check out the crossover platform above the couplers.

tional detail. The car is set up to have a prototypical look with a minimum operational track radius of 11 inches. Should you have tighter curves than that, they include the parts to raise the body on the trucks so they can swing more at the same time as they lower the coupler system down to where it will still work.

### Running the High-Cubes

Equipped with brown, plastic wheels and a swing-bar coupler system, these are very smooth-rolling cars. Out of the box, they are properly weighted by NMRA

standards. Our pair of samples followed our Kato locomotive around our curves with a ho-hum confidence. They didn't bobble, wobble, or derail.

If you got the notion to weight them heavier, it's easy to lift off the roof and give yourself access to the inside of the car. These are HUGE cars and look extremely cool in a train representing any era from the sixties to the present. Don't feel you need to build a large fleet of any particular roadname, however. Trains of auto parts were colorful with all sorts of roadnames in the consist. Many of these cars have

spent much of their lives on foreign roads, only occasionally visiting home.

### Bringing it on home

The couplers are good quality and work reliably, even with Kato couplers. Two of these cars are about as long as four 50 footers and yet puts half as many trucks on the rails. They handled 11-inch curves at around 90 scale miles per hour (yeah, I know; no mercy)! Just for fun, go visit Bluford's web site as you consider the idea of monster boxcars on your N-scale layout.

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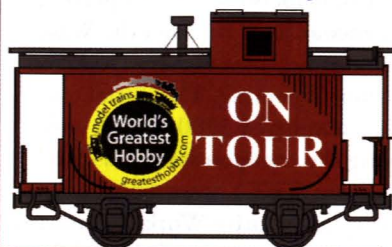


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REVIEW **HO**

## Broadway Limited's Brass-Hybrid Two-Ten-Two Steam Locomotive

*A new standard in model railroading?*

Review and Photos by David Otte

UP TTT-6/7 2-10-2, MSRP: \$450.00

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[www.broadway-limited.com](http://www.broadway-limited.com)

### By-The-Numbers

**2-10-2 TTT-6**

**Broadway Limited Imports**

**HO 1:87 • Type: Steam**

**Traction Tires? No**

**Pull Power (Ozs @ Full Slip)**

| Pull ÷ | Loco Wt = | Efficiency |
|--------|-----------|------------|
| 5.9    | 23.4      | 25.2%      |
| Volts  | Amps      |            |
| 12     | 0.45      |            |

### Analog DC

| Start Volts = 4.3 |      |           |
|-------------------|------|-----------|
| Volts             | Amps | Scale MPH |
| 9.4               | 0.09 | 1.2       |
| 10.0              | 0.12 | 3.4       |
| 11.0              | 0.17 | 15.1      |
| 12.0              | 0.23 | 29.8      |
| 13.0              | 0.26 | 53.6      |

### DCC

| Speed Step (of 128) | Scale MPH |
|---------------------|-----------|
| Min                 | 2         |
| Mid                 | 64        |
| Top                 | 128       |

FOR years the term “as good as brass” has been used by model railroaders when awarding their highest praise to a new product manufactured in another material, such as plastic or diecast metal. This proclamation is completely understandable as limited-run rolling stock, motive power, and even structures hand-fabricated from brass have a long history of displaying very accurate, road-specific details and high quality finishes. On the other hand, since they are usually produced in small quantities, these brass models also have always fetched a higher price than the models that hobbyists normally encounter at their local model train store. However, this tradition is undergoing some very positive changes. Broadway Limited Imports’ recent releases of brass-hybrid steam locomotives have raised the bar for level of detail on ready-to-run HO-scale models while keeping the price very competitive with the other mass-produced motive power currently on the market.

Following their first hybrid model, the New Haven I-5 (reviewed in the April 2008 issue of *Model Railroad News*), BLI has just released a replica of the Union Pacific Railroad’s standard freight power for the first half of the Twentieth Century, the Two-Ten-Two or TTT class. Factory-equipped with a decoder and digital sound system, this latest offering is ready-to-roll on either Digital Command Control or analog DC-powered layouts.

### A Santa Fe Type on Uncle Pete’s Road

The 2-10-2 wheel arrangement has been credited to the Santa Fe Railroad, which in 1903 developed the new Santa Fe type, as it became known as, from the existing 2-10-0 Decapod design. It combined the superior tractive effort of a ten-coupled engine with a single axle trailing truck, which not only provided better stability and speed when operating in reverse, but also allowed for a much deeper fire box than the Decapod could handle, offering better steaming conditions. As the Santa Fe found success in their new locomotive type, other railroads soon followed. In fact, construction of 2-10-2s in the U.S. climaxed during World War One when the United States Railroad Administration adopted the wheel arrangement. By the time the

last Santa Fe-type was delivered in 1931 over 2,000 had been built.

The Union Pacific first showed interest in this wheel arrangement in 1916 as it sought a locomotive that could handle increased tonnage and eliminate the use of helpers on the 1.14 percent grade encountered through the Wasatch Mountains between Ogden, Utah and Evanston, Wyoming. The initial ten 2-10-2s, numbered 5000 – 5009 and carrying the common standard class designation TTT-1, were delivered by Baldwin Locomotive Works in mid-1917. The TTTs quickly proved their ability hauling through freight trains on the Overland Route, especially the Evanston Subdivision, and additional orders for more of the locomotives quickly followed.

Baldwin turned out another 51 engines (TTT-2 through TTT-5) by early 1923 not only for the UP proper, but for subsidiaries Los Angeles & Salt Lake, Oregon Short Line, and Oregon Washington Railroad & Navigation Company with the latter road even using them in passenger service. By year’s end, the UP roster grew by another 73 units, classed as TTT-6s, constructed by the combined efforts of Baldwin, the American Locomotive Company’s Brooks Works, and Lima Locomotive Works. Final production of UP’s 2-10-2 fleet occurred in 1924 when Baldwin delivered 10 TTT-7s.

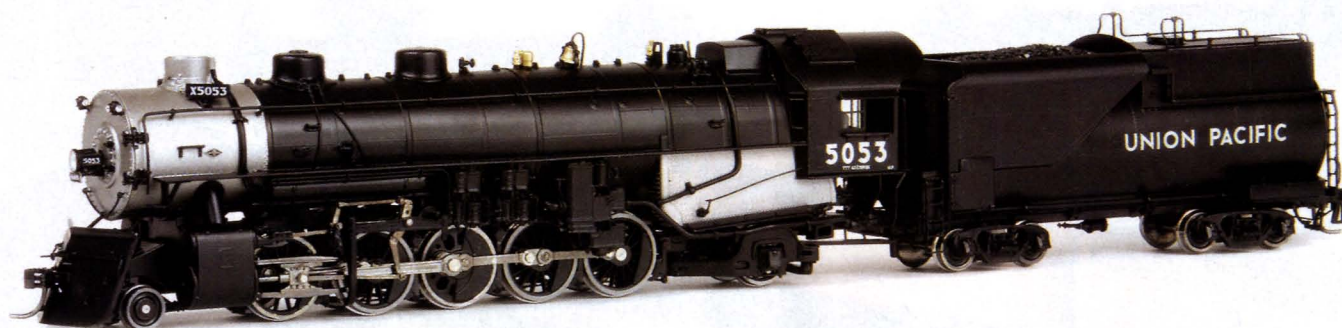
Common to all subclasses of the Two-Ten-Twos as-built were their 63-inch diameter drivers with a 22-foot 6-inch driver wheelbase, 29-1/2-inch by 30-inch cylinders, 284,000 – 311,000 pounds weight on drivers, 88-inch diameter boilers, 200-pound boiler pressure, a tractive effort of 70,450 pounds, mechanical stokers, two 8-1/2-inch cross-compound Westinghouse air pumps, standard UP cab with front walls angled back to sides and two roof vents, Schmidt Type A superheaters, power reverse, and Vanderbilt tenders. In addition, TTT-1 through -5 were outfitted with Walschaert valve gear and TTT-6/7s got Young type valve gear. TTT-5 through -7 used the 1921 Commonwealth Delta Type B trailing truck rather than the earlier classes’ Delta Type A truck. Later on, a number of the class were even equipped with trailing truck booster engines. Finally, 60 of the 144 total 2-10-2s were built as or converted to oil burners.





It looks like excess baggage now, but that heavy pilot plow will come in handy for the 5053 when old man winter arrives on the Nebraska plains. A variety of American Model Builders' laser-cut buildings and a pair of BLI BlueLine F7s set the scene for the HO-scale 2-10-2.





The 144-locomotive-strong Two-Ten-Two class on the UP included seven different subclasses. BLI's latest release represents the TTT-6/7. Delivered in 1923 and 1924, they made up more than half the 2-10-2 roster and can be easily identified by their use of Young valve gear over the earlier subclasses' Walschaert valve gear. Number 5053 was one of 37 TTT-6s erected by Lima. According to roster

information, 5053 weighed 309,000 pounds on her drivers, was equipped with Boxpok main drivers, and was one of only 17 members of the class to receive BK-type mechanical stokers. After some three decades of service, 5053 was sent to the scrapper in late 1955. BLI's accurate replica of this locomotive shows they did their homework on this complex class of steamers.

Although the early TTTs were replaced in 1923 on the Ogden to Evanston run by new 2-8-8-0s, the class remained the standard mainline heavy freight power between North Platte, Nebraska and Cheyenne, Wyoming, Laramie, Wyoming and Evanston, Wyoming, Montpelier, Idaho and Pocatello, Idaho, Huntington, Oregon and Rieth, Oregon, and between Salt Lake City, Utah and Los Angeles, California. Basically, they continued in service on sections of most system divisions through the 1930s with all 144 serving during the World War Two years. As the 9000 series 4-12-2s and later the 4-6-6-4 Challengers arrived on the scene in greater numbers, some TTTs

moved east to work on the Nebraska and Kansas Divisions. In later years, they were downgraded to supplementary roles on local freight runs or placed in storage until the peak seasons. The TTT class was used in helper service too and could be seen double-heading with the likes of the big 4-12-2s as well as those massive articulateds. Several oil-burning members of the class were also leased to the Southern Pacific from 1945 – 1948. A total of 104 2-10-2s were still active in 1952 when dieselization of the UP motive power roster started to ramp up. The 1954 delivery of new EMD GP9s made the TTT class all but obsolete. The last of the 2-10-2s were assigned to the Wyoming Division in work train

service in 1957 and all were off the roster by mid-1958 save the 5511, which remains today, silent but safe, in the UP's Historical Locomotive Collection.

### **Broadway's Hybrid TTT-6/7**

Recently, a number of model train companies with experience in importing brass locomotives have found it feasible for more popular railroad prototypes to be reproduced with a combination of brass, diecast metal, and even plastic components following traditional brass manufacturing and assembly techniques. These products are offered more for the operator than the collector. For example, a brass importer may bring in 200 pieces of a certain locomotive made entirely of brass for the collector at \$1,000.00 each. Utilizing the separately applied cast-



The Vanderbilt tender is equally well-detailed with real coal load, separately applied ladders, add-on hand rail, operating backup light and red marker light, air hoses, and coupler lift bar. Note the Kadee knuckle coupler and the water fill hatch on the deck that allows access to the factory default reset switch and volume control. You can also see the box-shaped extension made to the water tank in the early 1940s increasing the tender's capacity to 13,500 gallons and the Vulcan four wheel equalized trucks. Finally, note the square BK stoker access hatch on the front corner of the tender.

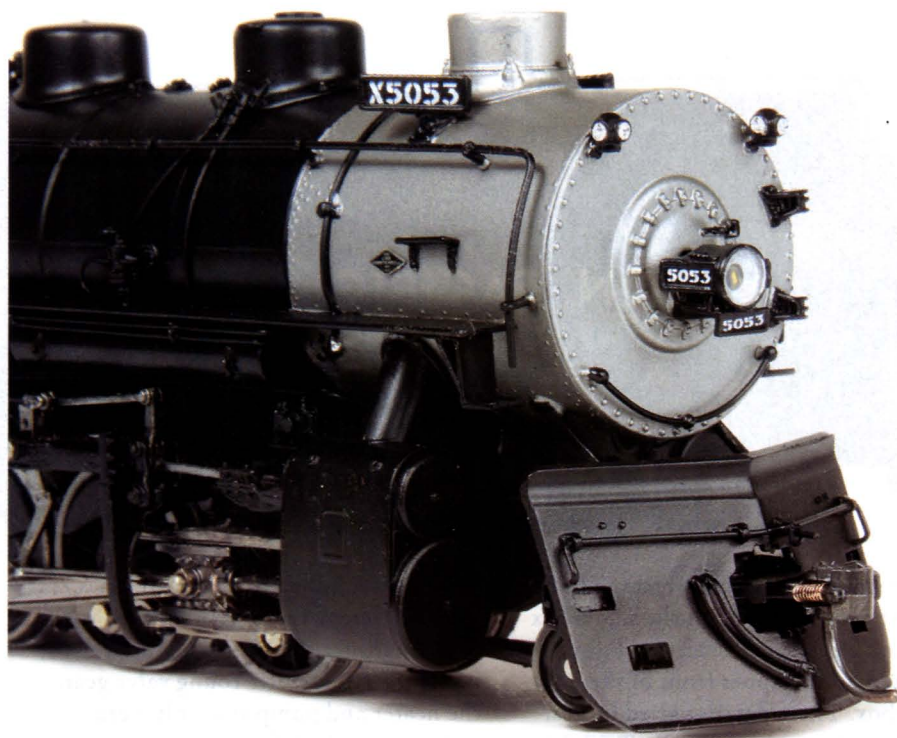


ings and running gear created for that offering, the importer could substitute a plastic or diecast metal boiler and tender body for the hand-fabricated brass ones, lowering the overall cost. A more affordable model will garner more pre-orders from average hobbyists resulting in a production run that may total 2,000 units. The builder, usually based in Korea or China, can then offer a quantity discount to the importer who in turn can make the consumer price even more attractive. The end result can be a hybrid model that costs half the price of the full brass collector's piece.

At least that was my take on the hybrid phenomenon. In BLI's case, they first offered a full brass model of this prototype to the collector market at a retail price of \$1,795.00, which included a roller bearing display case. Surprisingly, as best as I can determine the hybrid version of the TTT is almost completely made of brass as well: boiler, cab, and tender body are brass; only a smaller number of the more insignificant details, such as the brake shoes, are made of plastic. When this model is compared to the photo of the collector brass version on BLI's web site, there are a few noticeable external differences in level of detail of both the locomotive and tender, but for the most part, the hybrid model is very near a museum caliber model for the amazing price of \$450.00. I don't know how they do it, but what a bargain!

But wait; there is much, much more to this fantastic UP 2-10-2. In the category of dimensional accuracy, the BLI hybrid scores very well with most measurements I made with my trusty dial calipers coming within 1 scale inch of published data. That includes the all-important driver diameter and wheel-base dimensions. Since BLI is calling their products modernized TTT-6/7s, and we'll go into all that this pertains to a little later, the length of the model over coupler pulling faces should match the post-1941 recorded figures when new radial buffers were installed (forcing the cab to be moved back to meet the tender properly) between the locomotive and original 12,000 gallon Vanderbilt tender and changing its as-built length to 91-feet 2-inches.

At 12.75 inches, the HO-scale duo is about a scale foot too long, but subtract the operating requirements of the locomotive on typical track geometry,



The BLI model exhibits details galore with separately applied hand rails, coupler lift bar, train line air hose, LED illuminated headlight, number boards, class lights with jewels, and all the steam, sand, water, electrical, and air lines visible on the prototype. Under magnification, the Lima builder's plates read the construction number and correct delivery date for our sample. The unique sheet metal pilot plow, which measured almost 10 feet across and 6 feet tall, came into use on the UP's 2-10-2s in the 1940s. Note also that BLI has provided a Kadee coupler on the pilot, too, allowing the modeler to double-head their 2-10-2s.

which includes a longer drawbar and oversized knuckles and coupler shanks, and the length of the BLI model is quite acceptable. I went as far as checking the distances between the stack, domes, and other boiler top mounted appliances and found them to be located accurately as well. Why, they have even matched the enlarged 32.5-inch-diameter exhaust stack found on the TTT class of the 1940s. Impressive!

With the boiler, cab, and tender formed from brass, the details are very delicate and scale-like in appearance while maintaining sturdiness, which is sometimes difficult to achieve in other media. The separately applied details are numerous and well-crafted, including almost all the plumbing, railing, and appliances found on the prototype. The cab is well appointed too with the addition of some hand-painted crew figures seated inside and clear glazing in the window openings. The model sports nickel silver running gear and see-through spoked drivers. The tender has a real coal load with wire handholds and fine ladders to boot.

The only discrepancies apparent to me on this model concern the absence of cinder guards at the side windows,

and the rather plain smokebox front. Electrical conduit running between the class lights and to the headlight, a junction box, and their appropriate brackets should have been included. I noted all these details were present on the full brass model BLI offered, so perhaps it's the little details like this that the manufacturer left off the brass-hybrid to help keep costs down.

With the groundwork of this model laid, let's get down to specifics, which tell the true story of this model. BLI is advertising their 2-10-2 as a modernized TTT-6 numbered for UP 5044, 5053, 5507, and 5509 with these last two locomotives outfitted as oil burners. A painted, but unlettered version is also available.

We'll start with the "TTT-6" label first. The most noticeable difference between the earlier subclasses and the 6/7s was the use of Young valve gear. It looks pretty similar to Walschaert valve gear, however, the Young type derives its motion from the crossheads rather than the eccentric crank as found with the Walschaert type. BLI's model correctly displays this arrangement. It also exhibits the Delta Type B trailing truck, as mentioned above, as well as the later



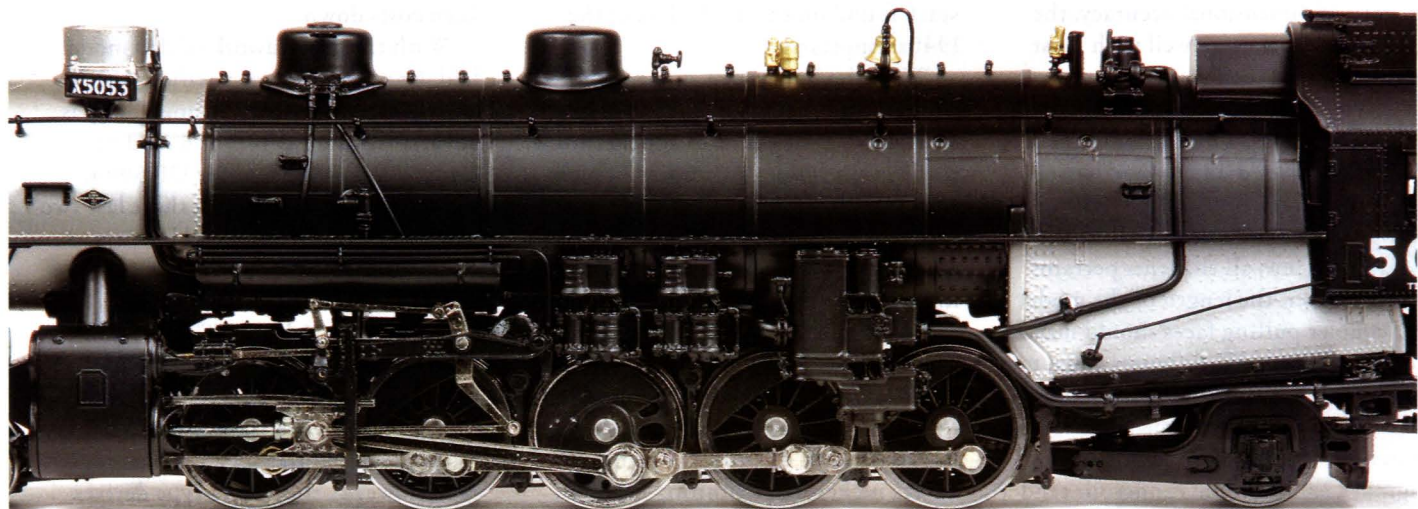


subclasses' headlight with rectangular number plate centered on the smokebox door and electric classification lights mounted on the upper front of the smokebox. These details varied in position on earlier as-built TTTs. TTT-5/6s were mostly equipped with cylindrical-shaped domes with relatively flat tops (except for numbers 5500 – 5514) like the model we reviewed, as compared to the full-radius domes of earlier class members and the wider saddle-style sand domes of the TTT-7s.

The “modernized” declaration offers even more insight to the BLI model. The TTT class as a whole received many updates starting in the late 1920s through the 1940s. The biggest change in appearance to these locomotives occurred between 1926 and 1930 when feedwater

heaters were added to the entire class. Seven different types were utilized with the Worthington 4BL most widely used. For the TTT-6s with Young valve gear, the heater and pump assembly were mounted on the left side of the engine behind the air pumps and below the running board, as correctly shown on our sample numbered for 5053. Also during this time frame hinges were applied to the left side of the smokebox front so the whole front end could be accessed and a Wilson two-tier blow-off muffler was installed near the steam turbine. Cabs were modified, too, seeing the left side window moved back leaving only a 4-inch wide pillar at the cab rear. This modification, which has been captured on the BLI 2-10-2, offered the head brakeman access to the window.

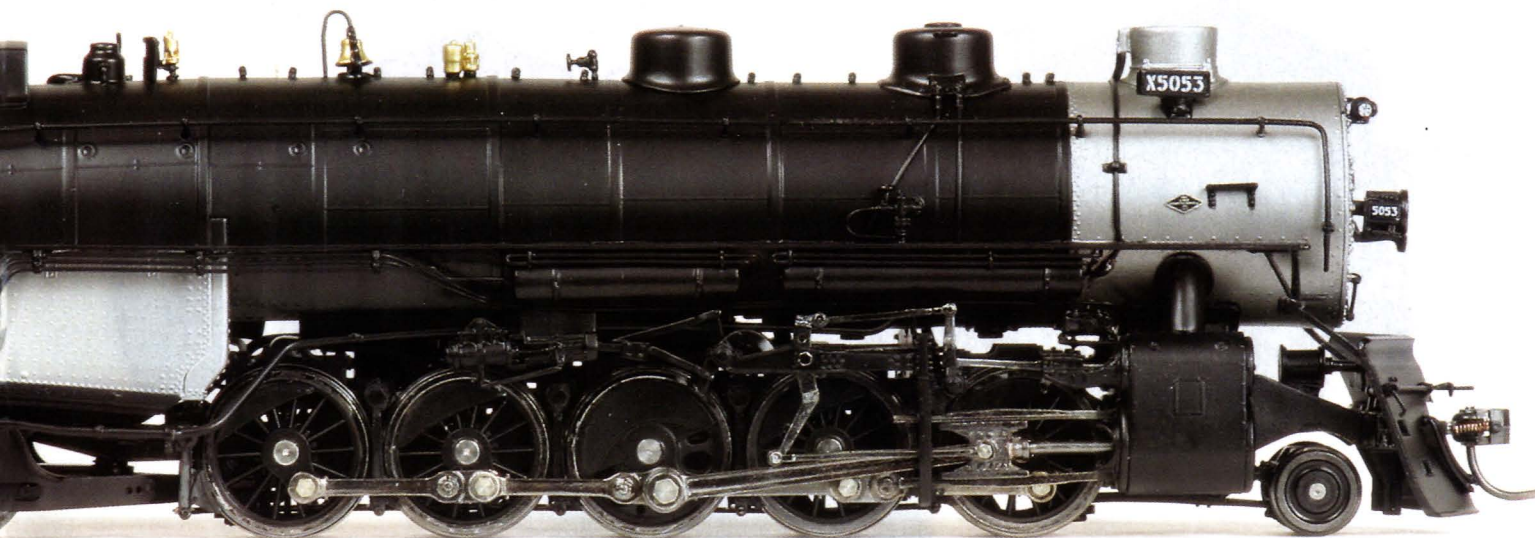
By the late 1930s, flat steel pilot plows came into use on the UP and subsequently several 2-10-2s would be so equipped over the years. Leading up until the mid-1940s, Disc or Boxpok-type main drivers (3rd axle) were applied to 85 percent of the TTTs to improve stability and lessen the damage these monstrous engines caused to the rails; Boxpok style are appropriately depicted on our 5053. This modification even allowed the TTTs maximum speed limit to be raised from 40 to 60 miles per hour. As mentioned earlier, exhaust stacks were increased in size for improved draft by the early 1940s during which time 17 coal-burning TTT-6s also had their Duplex type stokers replaced with BK type stokers, including 5053. The apparatus was mounted in the left front



BLI's intricately detailed ten-coupled driver set is evident in this photo. Rods, valves, alligator type crossheads, and guides are all made of nickel silver. Note the Young-type valve gear and its linkage to the crossheads; Walschaert valve gear would be linked to the eccentric crank. Also visible are the scale 63-inch diameter see-through drivers, most important of which are the Boxpok main drivers (3rd axle) installed on the majority of the TTT class in the late 1930s and early 1940s in an effort to reduce wear on the rails. The brake gear actually

has been replicated in full with the shoes, made of plastic to reduce chances of electrical shorts, visible and the brake beams and linkage continuing on underneath the engine. Finally, note the positions of the two 8-1/2-inch cross-compound Westinghouse air pumps, with one correctly placed over the third and the other between the third and fourth drivers, as they were on the prototype when the 5053 had its Worthington 4BL feedwater heater, depicted on the right of the air pumps, installed in the late 1920s.





The new Broadway Limited Imports' Union Pacific 2-10-2 is "as good as brass" because it's made almost entirely of brass! BLI's line of brass-hybrid models include brass boilers and tender shells, a plethora of mostly hand-applied brass

details, a smooth running drive mechanism, and a factory-installed DCC/sound decoder all at a price comparable to HO-scale ready-to-run plastic or diecast steam locomotives. It's an outstanding value for the operator or collector.

corner of the tender behind a 42-inch square compartment door, as seen on our sample's tender. Finally, many of the TTT-6s were outfitted with Automatic Cab Signaling in 1942, which could be determined visually by the presence of a box on the right front corner of the tender, correctly displayed on the BLI model as well.

Speaking of the tender, TTT6/7s were built with 12,000 gallon water and 20 ton coal or 5,200 gallon oil capacity Vanderbilt tenders riding on Vulcan

four-wheel equalized trucks. While most of the 2-10-2s retained their original partners, some of the class inherited bigger tenders from other UP locomotives, but the largest tenders used came from foreign Chesapeake & Ohio H-7 class 2-8-8-2s.

The particular locomotives that BLI is offering though, all retained their original tenders, but with the modifications that were incorporated by the UP in 1943. The water tank had a box-shaped extension added to its top in-

creasing the water capacity to 13,500 gallons and some coal-burning locomotives saw the addition of boards to the top sides of the fuel bunkers for improved loading. Unfortunately, coal boards were present in prototype photos of 5053, but were lacking on the BLI model.

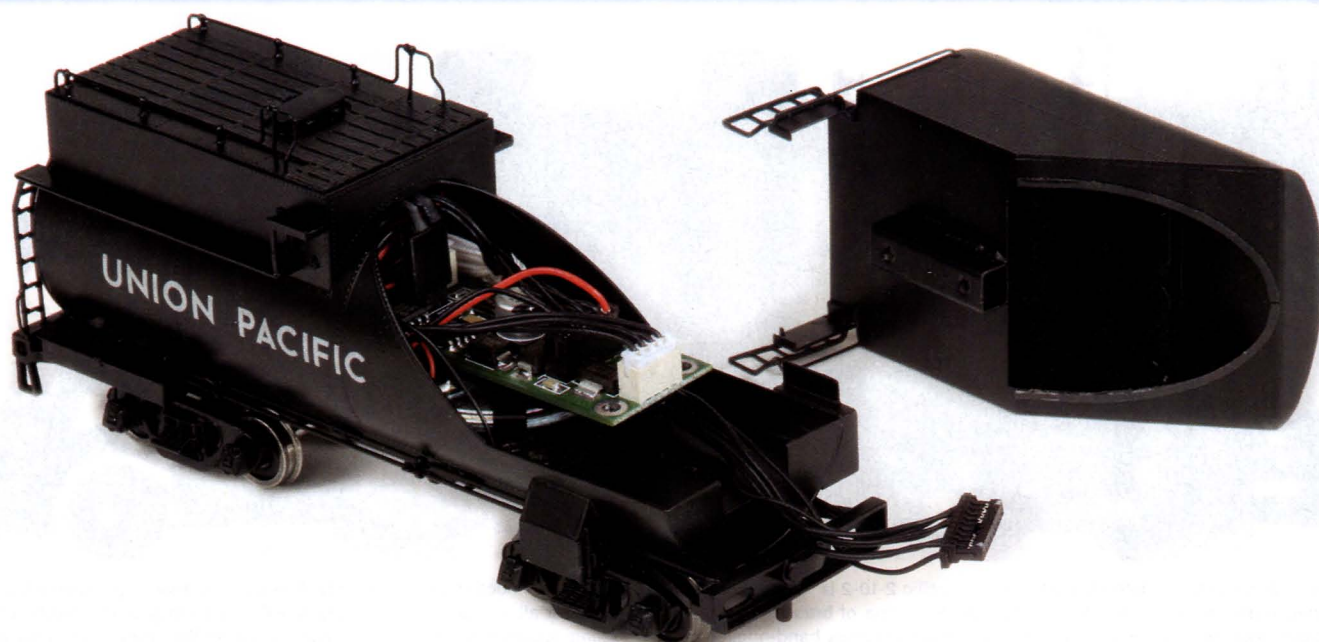
These modifications lead us to the decoration of the BLI models, which was very well executed on our review sample. The satin black finish on the engine and tender as well as the graphite-colored fire and smoke boxes were flawless to my



Connecting the tender to the locomotive is straightforward. A wiring harness with 9-pin micro plug coming from the tender pushes into the receptacle beneath the hinged tender apron on the engine with the pin under the tender placed in one of two holes on the metal drawbar, which is fastened to a pivot

point on the frame beneath the firebox. Note also the interior details of the backhead and the hand-painted crew figures, as well as the separately applied hand grabs along the coal bunker doors on the front of the tender. The high-quality brass features make this hybrid a real winner.





The tender houses the brains of this operation in the form of the Quantum DC/DCC decoder and sound system circuitry. The digital sound system utilizes two speakers, which lie face down in the shell floor. The interior of the brass tender

body is accessed by removing two small screws from underneath the floor and sliding the front of the fuel bunker off the chassis. The tender itself is light enough not to weigh the locomotive down, yet heavy enough to track well.

eyes and the post-1938 style aluminum colored lettering was sharp and opaque. Under magnification, the diamond shaped Lima builder's plate of our 5053, one of 37 built by Lima, correctly listed the builder's number as 6580 and was dated for July 1923, and the data on the cab sides properly listed the 5053's recorded weight on drivers at 309,000 pounds and "BK" for its stoker type. Outstanding!

Bottom line, our 5053 is a good match for a TTT-6 serving from the mid 1940s until retirement years, which came in August of 1955 for this particular prototype. Although I could not verify that the 5053 ever ran with a pilot plow based on the photos and roster information I had access to at the time of this review, the plow's unique design sure adds an aura of additional muscle to these mighty machines. It just looks cool.

### The Two-Ten-Two on the Test Track

Excellent operating characteristics and a splendid audio system join the visual pleasure the modeler will take in this product. The mechanics of this locomotive include a precision, flywheel-equipped 5-pole can motor that powers the third axle via a U-joint drive shaft. The rest of the drivers are powered through the connecting side rods. All drivers are flanged and the axles are sprung. There's plenty of lateral motion in the axles, too, so maneuvering

through minimum 22-inch radius curves is no problem for this model despite its long driver wheelbase.

Both the drivers as well as the wheels on one side of each tender truck act as electrical pickups allowing our model to move through turnouts and the like without any incidences of stalling during test runs. The tender is connected to the engine by way of a traditional flat drawbar outfitted with two holes, the closest to the end required for those 22-inch radius curves. With the electronics all housed in the tender, a 9-pin electrical connector and wire harness easily plugs into the receptacle beneath the hinged tender apron. All wheels were properly gauged when checked with an NMRA HO Standards Gauge and the flanges appeared to meet RP25 specifications. No anomalies were discovered while operating this locomotive on rail sizes down to code 70.

Lighting effects include golden white LEDs illuminating the directionally controlled engine headlight and the tender back-up light as well as its red marker light. The number boards and classification lights do not function, but class lights are outfitted with clear jewels that offer a satisfactory effect. Finally, the cab is lit up by an LED, too, staying on continuously while in neutral, but automatically going out after about 10 seconds of the engine moving forward or reverse.

Running our sample straight from the box with a 14-volt maximum transformer

and the sound off yielded a very quiet and smooth performing drive. Her lowest consistent operating speed registered at 1.2 scale miles per hour with a maximum speed attained at about 54 miles per hour – overall a good operating range for a UP 2-10-2. Although the engine lacks traction tires, its 1 pound 7.4 ounce weight provided good traction thanks to its brass construction and added boiler weight. The tender's brass construction is also beneficial, as it remains light enough in weight, 6.5 ounces, as not to be a burden for the engine, yet heavy enough to track well. On level track with 36-inch-radius curves, our review sample had no problem pulling a freight consist of 32 modern-era production cars with metal wheel sets and Kadee couplers. On a 2 percent grade and maintaining the 36-inch-radius curves, the TTT-6 could still handle 17 of these cars confidently.

Strangely, the engine is equipped with a standard Kadee number 5 coupler on the pilot while the tender has what appears to be a scale Kadee in its draft gear box. The tender coupler is mounted a little too low, but I was still able to couple the test train to it; the engine pilot coupler sits at the proper height.

BLI has equipped their 2-10-2 with a smart decoder, which automatically senses the type of layout control, either analog DC or DCC, as well as their familiar Quantum Sound system. This system has been discussed many times in the pages of *Model Railroad News*,





Despite the 2-10-2's long driver wheelbase, BLI has provided plenty of play in the axles so that the engine can negotiate those tight 22-inch radius curves commonly used on smaller layouts. She'll handle any track down to code 70 rail and can haul an ample consist despite the lack of traction tires. Turn the sounds off, and her quality drive system is virtually silent. Our sample made an impressive presentation right of the box with no break-in period required.

so it is sufficient to say that there were no surprises in this category. If you are operating under analog conditions, there are plenty of sound features that can be manipulated. However, they rely almost entirely on the use of the direction switch on your transformer to activate and even program these features. I found the system to work in analog, but often times it was quite tedious getting the timing of the flip of the direction switch just right. My recommendation to analog operators is to invest in BLI's Quantum Engineer analog remote control system.

This small control panel connects to your existing DC power pack allowing you to directly command most of the features incorporated in these Quantum-equipped locomotives without taking the plunge into DCC.

I prefer DCC operation myself and found our review sample to be quite cooperative, always responding as commanded. The only simple programming required for this model was to change the default address to the 4-digit engine number. It would be nice if the manufacturer would go ahead and preprogram the decoder with the roadnumber, as most model railroaders I know do this anyway. Nonetheless, if you try your hand at programming the model and run into trouble, there is a convenient reset switch located under the tender's water

hatch next to the manual volume control.

The sound effects were quite good on this model and BLI states that they are authentic UP TTT-6/7 sounds. I'll give them the benefit of the doubt as I had no way to compare the sound recordings with the locomotive. I thought the chuff sounds were convincing, the bell a little loud, and the whistle, which can be "played" to a degree with the F2 button, a little soft and somewhat alien in effect. It doesn't sound quite like any whistle I've heard before, but the UP had some real unique ones on their steam locomotives. I ended up placing the locomotive on the programming track and increasing the volume of the whistle while decreasing the bell and felt more satisfied with the end results. There are plenty of other audio effects, too, such as the air pumps, cylinder cocks, water injector, coupler clashing, squealing brakes, and so on, that add to the realistic operation of this model.

## Hybrids – the Future of Model Railroading?

I think UP fans will be quite satisfied with this TTT replica, as will most connoisseurs of fine steam locomotive models. This class of 2-10-2 was a complicated locomotive to replicate accurately in an HO-scale model, but BLI has done an incredible job of attaining that goal and at a reasonable price considering its brass construction. Based on the quality of fit, finish, and performance, the TTT-6/7 easily moves to the top of my list of favorite Broadway Limited models produced to date. As far as I am concerned, if all hybrid models are as good as this one, keep 'em coming. Hybrids work for me!

From this perspective, more details telling the story of the TTT class emerge. Starting at the smokebox, the enlarged exhaust stack with accurate cast-in bracket for the small air pumps' exhaust stack was installed on locomotives by 1940, the cylindrical shaped domes equipping the TTT-5 and most TTT-6s, the boiler vent valve, three pop valves, bell with air operated internal clapper outfitted in early 1930s, lagging clamps visible all along the top of the boiler jacket, whistle with the later addition of the curved shroud, Wilson blow-off muffler installed in the late 1930s, steam turbo generator off to the side, and square steam turret cover. Note also the two large cab roof vents, which are non-operable on the model.





REVIEW **O, HO**

## Fill'er up at Bud Smiley's Gas Stop

Review and Photos by Denis Dunning

0102 Bud Smiley's Gas Stop, HO Scale, MSRP: \$44.95

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**I**N MOST any small town in America one of the most important businesses was the gas station. Before the large oil companies began making their stations uniform, out-of-the-box structures, the gas station was built by the owner and came in every shape and size imaginable.

Bar Mills has just released the O-scale version of their Bud Smiley's Gas Stop. This is a clapboard-sided structure with a large overhang roof covering the gas pumps.

This review was originally planned for the O-scale version of the kit, but since I also had an HO kit that I had yet to build I built both scale kits at the



All of the full-color signs seen on the model are included in the kit. They are self-stick for easy installation.

same time. In each stage of the construction I did the same tasks on each kit, just to see how closely they matched. When there were differences in the two kits, I have made remarks about these deviations.

Art Fahey at Bar Mills Models is setting a high level in his products. The first thing you notice is the excellently designed full-color box. It includes a full description of what you will find in the kit, a number of full-color photos of the model, and even a scale rule printed on the inside flap for HO-, S-, and O-scale.

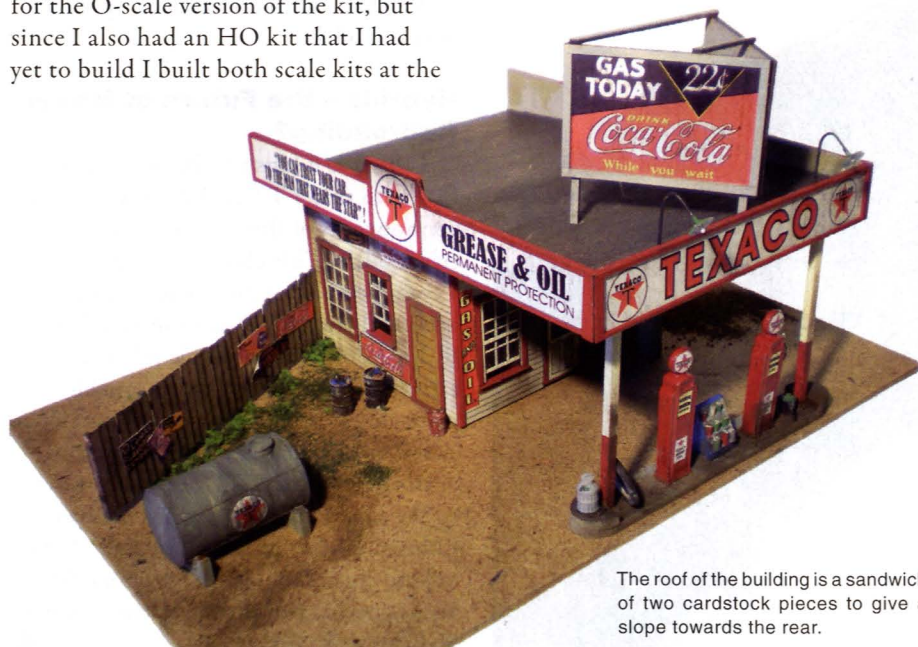
Inside the box the parts are separated in plastic bags to help keep things in the proper order. The instruction sheet has a large assortment of scale drawings, photographs of various steps in the assembly, well-written text, and even has an assortment of full-color advertising signs. And for those who are new at building craftsman type kits, there is a full-color Bar Mills catalog, which shows not only their product line, but includes a number of pages with many tips on building and weathering the models.

This kit includes cleanly laser-cut clapboard wood components, laser-cut windows and doors, pre-cut tar paper roofing, cardstock roofing underlay, basswood strips, pewter white metal castings, plastic molded light fixtures, brass wire, and full-color signs.

The instructions are very well written and include plan views of the finished building as well as a number of photos showing the various steps in the construction. The basic building is simply four walls with a large overhanging roof set atop the walls.

Details such as the interior bracing, corner trim, and the roof supports need to be cut to size. A NESL Chopper will come in very handy here, insuring that all of these parts are identical in size.

The windows and doors in the O-scale version are laser-cut from very thin wood with a self-stick backing.



The roof of the building is a sandwich of two cardstock pieces to give a slope towards the rear.



Included are an exterior frame, top frame piece, sill, and an upper and lower sash. These windows go together very easily but are a bit time-consuming. Take your time and the final effect is terrific. With the design of the upper and lower sash you can build the windows in an open or closed position. Once the windows are installed, the self-stick backing holds the clear acetate in place.

On the HO version, the kit includes plastic molded windows and doors. I presume in the smaller size the laser-cut windows that Bar Mills used to provide were a bit too delicate and difficult for many modelers. The plastic windows and doors have excellent detail and fit the pre-cut openings perfectly.

The roof of the building has a very eye-catching design. It is actually two pieces of cardstock that are glued to inside formers. This gives a flat ceiling on the underside and a sloped roof on the top. Self-stick roofing with the look of rolled roofing is supplied. I find that it is easier to keep the roofing straight by drawing parallel lines on the sub roof before the roofing strips are installed.

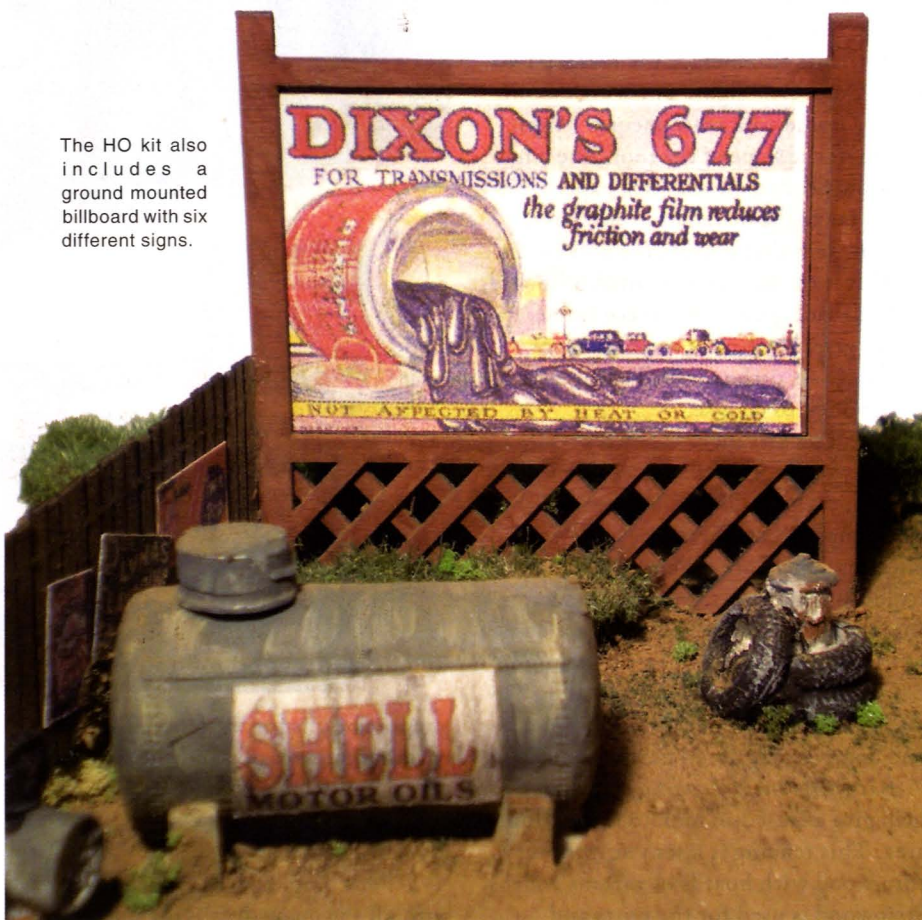
To complete the roof, there is a front and two sides that hold the large signs. As it says in the instructions "...this building is all about signs!" and that is certainly the case with the roof signs. All of these signs are printed in full color on self-stick paper. They are not difficult to install but great care must be taken to insure that you cut the signs to the correct size before you try and stick them in their respective places.

To finish off the signs there are some really neat laser-cut trim boards. These provide a three-dimensional look to the signs and have some filets around the square sign on each side of the roof. These pieces are self-stick, so make sure



Shown is the HO version with the Inst-Fence, oil tank, and the other detail items included in the kit.

The HO kit also includes a ground mounted billboard with six different signs.



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they are correctly aligned before you put any pressure on the adhesive — once they are in place they stick extremely tightly.

The only difference in the signage in the two kits is that the HO kit provides two different signs for the roof edge decorations. The O-scale kit has signage for Texaco, while the HO kit has the Texaco sign as well as a Shell sign. The way the HO signs are laid out you could actually have different signs on each side. It would be fun to see how long it took visitors to see the competing brands on the same gas station. Incidentally, poor Bud Smiley never gets his name on the station anywhere.

Both kits also include the rooftop two-sided Coca-Cola signs. These are mounted on a framework with unequal length legs to fit the slope of the roof. The large signs are printed on self-stick paper, which make the installation very easy.

One item that is available only in the HO kit is the ground-mounted billboard. This is made from a two-piece frame, which gives the basket weave bottom. There are six different billboard signs from which to choose.

Both size kits include pewter white metal castings, though they are not the same in each kit. They both include the gas pumps, oil and kerosene tanks, and old tires. There are other detail parts including oil drums, and assorted items that make the completed structure come to life. These should all be pre-painted before installation, and the Catalog/Tip Sheet covers various ways to add color and depth to the detail parts.

Bar Mills Insta-Fencing is included to help give a closed-in look to the station area. This fencing is laser-cut from very thin wood with boards of various widths. Stripwood is used for the posts and



The Gas Pumps and the other details are soft metal castings with excellent detailing.



Windows and doors on the HO kit are plastic moldings rather than the laser-cut parts on the O-scale kit.

support beams for the fence. This goes together quite easily, and the finished effect is outstanding.

### Eye Catching

When completed, the Gas Station with all the many details included pro-

vides a very eye-catching structure for any small town scene whether you prefer O- or HO-scale. The various parts can be rearranged to fit any particular spot on your railroad. These are well-designed kits that will provide you with many hours of interesting construction.

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## Weaver to offer company housing in O

O—Weaver Models has announced a new Company Row House. The 1/4-inch scale dimension, high impact styrene body will be white with light gray roof, feature window inserts, and brown scribed stone foundation detail with red scribed brick chimney detail.

Expected late spring to early summer, the houses will be sold individually for \$49.95, in two-packs for \$93.90, or in three-packs for \$134.85.

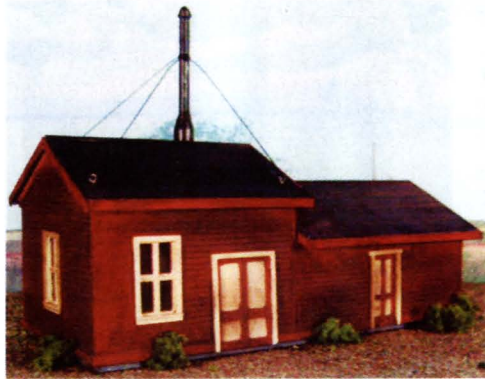
Weaver Models P.O. Box 231, Northumberland, PA 17857-0231; 570-473-9434; Fax: 570-473-3293; E-mail: customerservice@weavermodels.com; www.weavermodels.com



## New boiler/pump house from Kanamodel

HO — Kanamodel has released a boiler/pump house scaled from the Canadian Pacific blueprints. This lasercut kit includes cast windows and doors, and a special stack. Color-coded stripwood by Mt. Albert, self-adhesive roofing material, guy wire material, wire tie down loops, and instructions are included. The suggested retail price is \$34.95.

Kanamodel Products Inc., P.O. Box 57585-1031, Coquitlam, BC V3K 6S8; E-mail: info@kanamodel.com; www.kanamodel.com



## Sidetrack releases Flying A gas station

O — Sidetrack Laser has released the Elma Flying A gas station. The kit features laser-cut walls, structure features, windows, door, graphics, and interior detailing. The kit also features Berkshire Valley cast details parts, Grandt Line barrels, and paper graphics, some original styled. The footprint measures 4 by 7 inches. The station retails for \$87.95.



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# Spherical water tower from Rail Town Model Railroad Supplies

**N & HO** — Rail Town Model Railroad Supplies has released a spherical water tower with a flashing red LED for both N- and HO-scale modelers.

Modeled after modern water towers found all over the country, these kits are the perfect size for most layouts. Details include an entry door and mounting nuts around the base flange. A special decal set includes additional door details, a window, and a No Trespassing sign.

Designed for easy assembly, the plastic molded parts are pre-colored in sky blue or white. Complete instructions are included. For HO-scale the base diameter is approximately 3 inches, the largest diameter of the sphere is approximately 4 inches, and the overall height is 9-3/4 inches (approximately 70 HO-scale feet). For N scale the base diameter is 1-1/2 inches, the largest diameter of the sphere is approximately 2-1/8 inches, and the overall height is 5-3/8 inches (approximately 71 N-scale feet).

The Flashing Red LED comes fully assembled with a super compact full wave Bridge Rectifier, a capacitor, and a dropping resistor, all shrink tubed and ready to use with 14 inches of insulated wire. The LEDs can connect to AC, DC, or DCC. They will work with 7 to 19 volts of power, or a 9V or 12 volt battery. The HO-scale LED is 5 millimeters in diameter and the N-scale LED is 3 millimeters in diameter. The kits are said to be easy to assemble with clear instructions. Kits are available without flashing red lights, and the flashing red lights are available separately.

The HO spherical water tower is available in sky blue with the flashing light (#2904 L) for \$22.99, and without the flashing light (#2904) for \$15.99 each. It is also available in white with a flashing light (#2905 L) for \$22.99, or without the



light (#2905) for \$15.99. In N-scale the tower is available in sky blue with the light (#3901 L) for \$22.99 each, and without the light (#3901) for \$15.99 each. It is also available in white with the light (#3902 L) for \$22.99, and without the light (#3902) for \$15.99 each. The flashing tower lights are also available separately for HO (#4905) and N (#4903) for \$9.99 each.

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# Monroe Models releases Ellie's House



Not far from the tracks, and across the street from the depot, Ellie sits on her front step, or watches out her bay window whenever a train arrives in town. HO model shown.

**N & HO** — Monroe Models has released Ellie's House. The kit is based on a Victorian-era Gothic House of the late 1800s. It is made of precision lasercut basswood, fiberboard, and plastic materials. It includes castmetal chimneys, peel and stick windows and trim, plus lasercut window glazing. The roof is covered by lasercut, peel and stick, saw tooth, and simulated cedar shake shingles. The kit requires wood glue for assembly, and paint. The scenery, figures, vehicles, and trees are not included.

The HO-scale footprint is 6-1/2 inches in length by 5-1/4 inches wide by 4 inches high, and the N model is 3-5/8 inches long by 2-5/8 inches wide by 2-1/4 inches high. The HO kit (#2205) retails for \$67.95 and the N-scale kit (#9205) retail for \$34.95.

Monroe Models, P.O. Box 1120, Cokato, MN 55321; 320-286-2854; E-mail: monroemodels@cmgate.com; www.monroemodels.us

# Summit USA offers healthy fast-food alternative



This new kit will add a fresh flavor to modern towns.

**HO** — Summit USA has announced the release of their newest kit, a Subway fast-food restaurant. The kit includes all building parts, signs, and window frames milled in white and black styrene, clear window glazing, self-adhesive posters, and full assembly instructions with pictures. The model

requires painting. The parking lot base is not included, due to varying layout sizes. The base of the model measures 3 inches by 6-1/4 inches by 2-1/4 inches (76 by 159 by 57 millimeters). The suggested retail price is \$29.95.

Summit USA, LLC, 512 Ford St., Lake Charles, LA 70601; 337-436-8481; Fax: 337-436-8481; E-mail: pbl@summit-usa.net; www.summit-customcuts.com

# New bridge will help passengers cross tracks safely



**HO** — Southcoast Scale Models has released a new pedestrian cross over bridge. The kit (#002) is composed of a one-piece hollow resin casting for the main structure, one-piece resin roof, and resin stairwells that can be

positioned in either direction. Tichy windows and Central valley parts are also included with painting and assembly directions. These structures were found at many busy passenger stations so travelers could cross over the tracks safely. The kit retails for \$39.95.

Southcoast Scale Models, 1324 Old Fall River Rd, North Dartmouth, MA 02747; 508-567-3708; E-mail: scsm20034@netscape.com; www.southcoastsm.com

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REVIEW **HO**

## Pushing The Envelope – Caterpillar D9T Bulldozer

Review by Wayne Calder, Photos by Bill Cawthon

Caterpillar D9T Dozer, HO scale,  
MSRP: \$27.95

Norscot Group, Inc.  
1000 West Donges Bay Rd.  
Mequon, WI 53092  
800-653-3313 • Fax: 800-653-4904  
[www.norscot.com](http://www.norscot.com)

ONE of the greatest thrills I remember as a kid was being able to climb aboard a CAT Scraper. Its size was just awesome for me. That amazement continues today. Only my fellow construction equipment enthusiasts and my wife seem to understand the passion I have for these pieces of iron (steel actually). It does induce a sudden check the mirror, slam on the brakes, execute a perfect autocross U-turn and punch the accelerator to catch up to a lowboy transporting a 160,000 lb. dozer behavior. You may well think that I am a tad tweaked too, but allow me to ask what you would do if you saw a Big Boy chuffing its way down the railway line in the opposite direction of you?

You may not know a lot about bulldozers, but you have likely noticed that most Caterpillar versions have a very dif-

ferent look to them. Two words: elevated sprocket. On all other brands of dozers the top and bottom of the tracks are parallel to each other. Not so on the D9T where they form a triangular shape. This is not a recent design mind you; it goes all the way back to the turn of the last century. It is not even a recent design on modern-era Cat dozers as it dates from the early seventies.

Many a company has taken a huge risk to depart from the successful norm and failed (read the Chrysler Airflow review back in the April 2008 edition for an example). Caterpillar's elevated sprocket idea had been tried before back in 1910 by Holt, Cat's founding company. Others tried in that same time period. The design was not well received.

Let's skip a few decades to the Sixties. Cat was beginning to look at a larger dozer than their highly successful D9. Marrying this objective to a now resurrected and better-engineered elevated sprocket experiment saw the D10 being born. To show how seriously Caterpillar took both their reliability and the need to test the new design, consider that it took from mid-1970 to early 1978 to bring the dozer to market. Not only had Caterpillar leaped the competition in

the productivity of top-end dozers, it had leaped them in design.

The advantages of an elevated sprocket from both a durability and maintenance point were significant. No longer was the drive sprocket wallowing about in mud and grime. What Elvis had done to popular music, Cat had done to bulldozer design. Almost 1,000 of these very niche machines were built, mostly for use in the mines. Their competitors agonized. How were they to know that this was but the tiny tip of an iceberg? By the time the D10 was replaced by the D11N, the design had spread down to the smaller dozers. Following which model replaced which would be like trying to figure out a Celsius to Fahrenheit conversion in your head. Suffice to say the "L," "M," "N," and "R" series followed in, at times, illogical orders. Today we have the "T" series, which brings us full circle to the subject of our review.

You may be surprised to find out that purchasing a Caterpillar dozer is an experience akin to your purchase of a new car or truck — lots of options. One choice a contractor must make in purchasing a bulldozer is what type of blade they want. In the case of the D9T there are two possibilities, a 9U blade



Norscot's big Cat D9T is a fine replica of a major earthmover.



or the 9SU blade. The 9U blade allows 21.5 cubic yards of dirt to be pushed as opposed to the “measly” 17.7 cubic yards that the SU blade allows. The SU blade is used where the ground is hard and blade penetration is more important than the capacity of dirt being moved. To put 21.5 cubic yards in perspective; your average cement mixer truck carries about 11 cubic yards of material.

## The Model

There will be little doubt that you are buying an officially licensed Caterpillar product when you see the box it comes in, with the 1.25-inch high Cat “Power Logo.” Said box is sturdy, with a viewing window that allows you to have good view of the model from both the top and the side. Sliding out the tray upon which it sits is a cinch. The model is held to that base by those dreaded plastic coated metal wires that make it more difficult to remove than the shingles that were lodged in our front yard trees after Hurricane Ike did a remodeling job on our house.

Big bulldozers are intimidating; they would be more accurately referred to as no-bull-dozers. Norscot has captured that presence. The first part of that will come the moment that you hold this model in your hand. It is weighty. Put an HO pickup or SUV next to it and you will then realize its size. The width of the blade on this piece is over 15 feet. A Cat D9T occupies almost 425 square feet of ground. An EMD F40PH takes up 600. That would make this smaller-end mining bulldozer rather large.

The blade, a 9U option on this model, tilts forward and back as well as moves up and down. The Tag-Link (a diagonal link that runs from the lower-front of the dozer’s radiator cowl across to

the bottom of the blade) is a somewhat hidden detail that makes it being there all the more special. Many do not realize they are on a bulldozer so Norscot could have taken a short cut and only the hard-core construction equipment fans would have noticed.

Lack of detail stands out far more on a big model than on a small HO car. An area where most tracked equipment suffers in this way is where tracks are made out of rubber in order to keep them movable. The major problem here is that rubber tracks on construction models often make them look toy-like as they have the finished appearance of an eraser. It is thus remarkable how Norscot managed to give movable rubber tracks a painted finish. Of the automotive industry someone once said “Anyone can build a car, few can build one that works.” In this case it would be “Anyone can paint movable rubber tracks, few can do it so the paint doesn’t flake off when they are moved.”

Up to now, painted tracks meant two things: the tracks were molded plastic and didn’t move or they were individual metal pads linked together like the prototype. There have been some grumblings on discussion sites and message boards that this D9T’s tracks are not metal with separate links. At this point I have to go with Norscot’s decision as such detail would drive up the price considerably. As is the case with their solid, diecast undercarriage and bogies, I would like to see crisper details on this casting, it would take away the paint-has-been-laid-on-too-thick look.

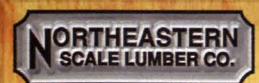
The pad printing is outstanding. The paint is authentic Cat yellow, not some generic, mustard yellow color. It is solid enough that there is consistency around the many complex curves and joints of

this model. It is light enough that the grills on the engine covers are visible. There is also paint in the nooks and crannies. If you turn the model upside down and look at the underside of the cab platform and gas tanks you will see paint. Peek between the tracks and the upper body and even that small gap it is painted.

My hunch is that you have spent as much time looking at the underside of a bulldozer as you have trying to figure out the maximum number of decimal places you can find behind Pi. Were you to do so (look under a dozer, that is) you would be very disappointed. There is not much to see. This is a matter of function. Dust, grime, mud, and rocks are things that bulldozer manufacturers go to great lengths to keep out of the moving parts. They also minimize the number of parts that protrude so as not to catch on rocks. Norscot has done a commendable work in replicating what little there is under there, other than the two large Phillip’s head screws, that is.

Norscot’s Cat D9T is very accurate in being 1:87, except for one area: wheelbase. A quick technical term explanation. The wheelbase on a car or truck is the measurement from the center of the front axle to the center of the rear axle. On a dozer this dimension is referred to as “length of track on ground.” On this model it is one scale foot too long. While this would only be noticed by yellow iron lovers, it is an important dimension to get right.

There is a distinct lack of detail on the grab rails. Instead of an independent, standalone rail you will find a raised piece of metal. I can certainly empathize with Norscot’s dilemma. The more detail, the more the cost goes up. I am no bean counter, but I would not think that mak-



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## BRASS CAR SIDES

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With its moveable blade and ripper, this Cat is ready to start working on your layout.

ing the four essential grabs on the engine cover and the two on the front of the cab as a separate plastic part would drive the price up that significantly. It is not unfair to expect this detail as this has been the standard practice on the other non-Xmart 1:87 Norscot pieces to date. The grab rails on top of the cab are correctly presented strangely enough. Painted lights on top of blade pistons, at the front of door entry platform and on the rear would also be a very welcome feature.

The multi-shank ripper adjusts for both height and angle. The decision that Norscot made to allow this reality meant committing to the complexity of adding a number of pin joins, pistons, and cylinders. This is a lot easier to do on a 1:50-scale model than on a 1:87-scale piece. Along with the blade angle adjustment, this automatically puts this piece

in the "Highly Recommended" column for construction models. I count a total of 26 pins on Norscot's D9T, allowing for it to be posed in some very real-world settings. The pins are so small in some cases that pulling one and dropping it would induce a modification to the proverbial saying allowing you to coin the phrase "it is as difficult as finding a pin in the carpet."

Small as they are, those pins are sturdy. There is no sense of fragility as one moves any of the parts. There is no slop in them either. The model I reviewed had a problem with the multi-shank ripper on the dozer in that it would not raise up high enough to allow the tracks to sit even on the ground. I am aware of only one other incidence of this, noted on one of the four model related message boards I participate in. This

would appear to be a problem experienced by a miniscule number of purchasers. Norscot has said that they will gladly replace the models for any customer who is not satisfied.

### Never a Disappointment

I am anxiously awaiting Norscot's 2009 catalog. They are the ones to be credited for putting modern-era construction pieces back into the world of HO model railroaders and 1:87 collectors. If there were as many railroad ties as there are suggestions for what Norscot should produce, every city would be connected by rail. Their choices have not disappointed me. So many layouts have much the same vehicles on them. Add a D9T to yours and believe you me, it will add a notable difference. It will not disappoint you.

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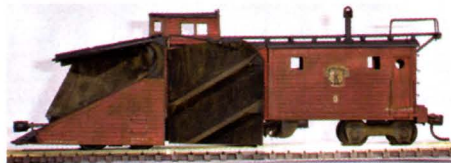
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## Return of the Russell snowplow



**HO** — Northeastern Scale Lumber Company has announced the return of Russell snowplow. The product has been released in a limited run of five-hundred kits, and is now available.

The plow (#01) is a craftsman kit, for the experienced model builder. It consists of laser-cut basswood, metal, plastic, and resin parts. NESL states that construction of the plow blade, the bane of many modelers in the past, has been eliminated by the use of a cast plow blade. Trucks and couplers are not included. It is available direct from Northeastern Scale Lumber Company for \$79.99.

The Russel Plow kit is based on a Russell No. 2 snowplow that was manufactured in the late 1800s. The plows are still in use on railroads around the country. Every railroad in the northern half of the USA and Canada, the Snow Belt, had a snowplow and many were of this style. This model is a "Single Track" type.

Northeastern Scale Lumber Co., 99 Cross St, Methuen, MA 01844-1614; 800-343-2094; Fax: 978 794-9104; E-mail: msarno@northeasternscalelumber.com; www.northeasternscalelumber.com

## New Cat 769 mining truck from Classic Construction Models

**1:48** — Classic Construction Models has announced the availability of the 1960s vintage Cat 769 Mining Truck model in 1:48 scale. This truck is the second release in a series of Caterpillar diecast models CCM is producing from all new tooling.

This model is based on taking and developing field measurements into 3D computer drawings that were combined with the latest in 3D model

making technology to make the final product. It features a perforated grill, clear molded headlights, chromed piston rods, finely sculpted body lines, fully detailed engine and drive train, and accurate cab interior. The model retails for \$139.95.

Classic Construction Models, 6590 SW Fallbrook Place, Beaverton, OR 97008-5465; 503-626-6395; Fax: 503-644-9223; E-mail: sales@ccmodels.com; www.ccmodels.com



Classic Construction Model's CAT 769 is a limited production model from all-new tooling.

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## REVIEW **N**

### A Marriage between Roadbed and Code 65 Rail

Atlas Introduces True-Track in N Scale

Review and Photos by Phil Scandura

True-Track 6-Inch Straights (package of six), MSRP: \$10.95

True-Track 12.5-Inch Radius Curves (package of eight), MSRP: \$12.95

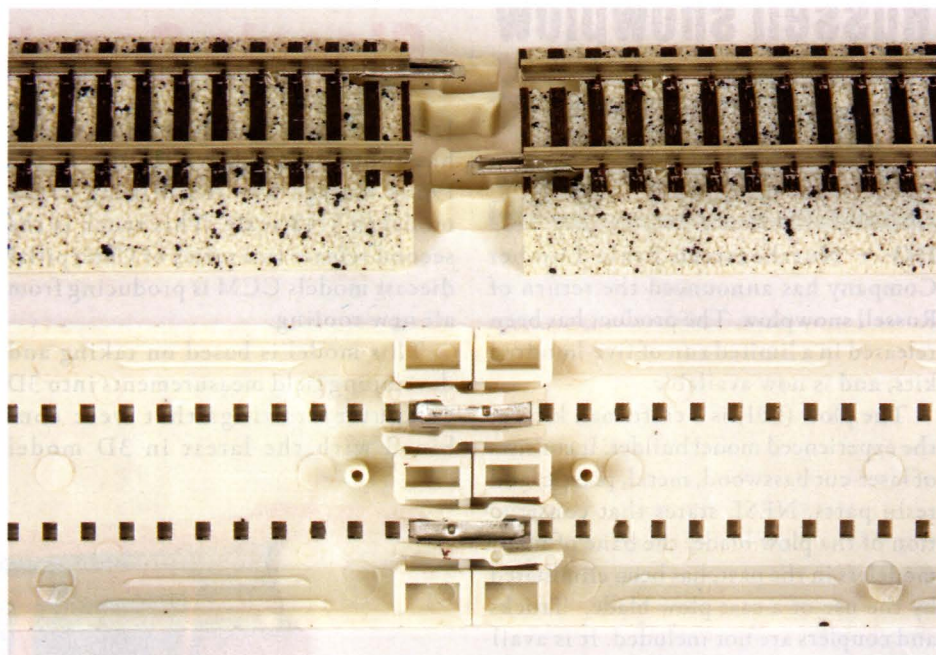
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**F**OR the first time, Atlas introduces N-scale sectional track with integrated roadbed, called True-Track. Following in the footsteps of their extensive line of sectional track, Atlas' new True-Track combines Code 65 rail with realistic looking roadbed, making it quick and easy to create reliable layouts. First packaged with the Atlas Trainman Train Set in N scale, we took a brief look at True-Track in the December 2008 issue of *Model Railroad News*. Now True-Track is available separately, with new pieces being released on a regular basis. This month we dive deeper into this new and exciting product line from Atlas.

#### A Little History

My introduction to N-scale began with an Aurora Postage Stamp train set received for my ninth birthday. The set included a simple oval of track I quickly expanded with any brand of track I could afford. I later discovered Atlas track for N scale and used it exclusively for many years. Prior to the introduction of True-Track, Atlas N-scale track was limited to sectional track without roadbed. Your choices were Code 80 track with black ties or Code 55 track with brown ties. Since it did not include roadbed, setting



Atlas' new True-Track is a sectional track that combines Code 65 rail with realistic looking ties and roadbed. The roadbed includes molded plastic clips that hold the sections firmly together. The metal rail joiners include a small crimp to keep them from pulling off by accident when the track is taken apart. Shown here is the track prior to assembly (top photo) and an underneath view of the plastic clips holding two sections together (bottom photo).

up a temporary layout was limited to a hard surface such as a tile or wood floor, dining room table, or sheet of plywood. Sections of track were held together by metal rail joiners. After repeated assembly and disassembly cycles, the joiners would weaken allowing the rails to slip apart and it was time to replace them.

#### Innovative True-Track

With the introduction of True-Track, modelers now have the added choice of Code 65 track with integrated (attached) roadbed featuring prototypical tie spacing, brown ties, and simulated ballast. The roadbed includes molded plastic clips that hold the sections firmly together. Metal rail joiners include a small crimp to keep them from pulling off by accident, but they can be removed using needle-nose pliers. Extra rail joiners can be purchased separately, as well as insulated joiners and terminal joiners used to supply power to the track. [Be sure to purchase those specially intended for Code 65 as Atlas also sells joiners for use with Code 80 and Code 55 - Ed.]

To be honest, sectional track with integrated roadbed isn't new in N scale. Other companies have been offering it for some time. What sets Atlas True-Track apart from the rest is its prototypical appear-

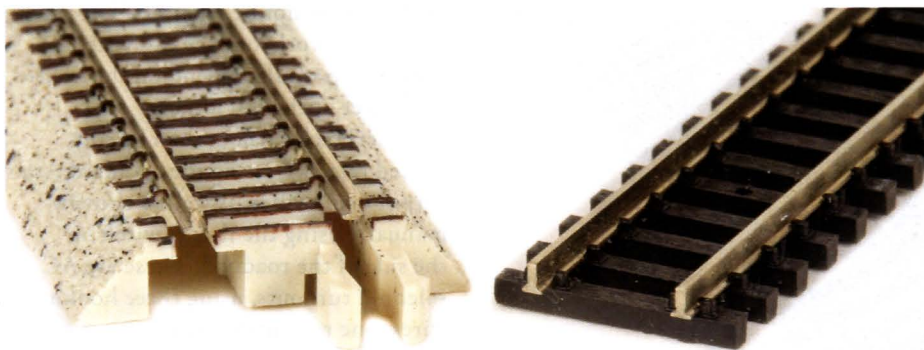
ance, exhibited both in the spacing of the brown ties and the size of the rail.

#### Rail Code

For those not familiar with the term code, it refers to the size of the rail used in prototype railroading. The larger the code number, the heavier the rail. Specifically, the code number reflects the weight of one yard of rail. For example, Code 80 weighs 80 pounds per yard, Code 65 weighs 65 pounds per yard, and so on. Heavier rail is also taller than lighter rail: Code 80 is five inches tall; Code 65 is four and seven-sixteenths inches tall and Code 55 is four and one-sixteenth inches tall. As a general rule, heavier rail is used for mainlines while lighter rail is used for branch lines and yards.

In the modeling community, rail code reflects the height of the rail in thousands of an inch. In other words, Code 80 rail is 0.080 inches tall, Code 65 is 0.065 inches tall, and Code 55 is 0.055 inches tall. Converting from N scale to full scale, you find that Code 80 model rail is nearly thirteen inches tall in real life, Code 65 is just over ten inches tall, and Code 55 is just less than nine inches tall. Clearly these are way too tall, compared to the prototype. In fact, at-





In railroading the term code refers to the size of the rail, the larger the code number, the heavier/heftier the rail. N-scale train sets are most often packaged with Code 80 track (right), which many modelers believe is too tall yet is necessary to ensure all brands of model trains can operate on it. Atlas has decided to offer True-Track in Code 65 (left), which provides a more prototypical look while ensuring most all N-scale equipment can operate on it.

tempting to replicate prototype Code 80 rail (five inches tall) would result in approximately Code 30 rail (0.030 inches tall) in N scale! As one would expect, as the size of N-scale rail gets smaller, the track becomes more delicate, harder to handle without damaging, and just plain difficult to work with. In addition, the size of an N-scale wheel flange becomes so small it is nearly invisible. That's why model train track is typically oversized; otherwise it just wouldn't work well.

Many N-scale modelers have adopted smaller rail to better represent prototype track, most typically using Code 55. Unfortunately, not all N-scale locomotives and rolling stock have wheels designed to operate on Code 55 track. As already mentioned, flange size is the key consideration. "Low profile" wheel flanges work well on Code 55, while "pizza cutter"-sized wheel flanges do not. Their larger size can interfere with the simulated spikes and tie plates and have difficulty traveling through turnouts. Consequently N-scale train sets are most often packaged with Code 80 track. The decision to offer True-Track in Code 65 represents a healthy compromise that lets all N-scale equipment operate while providing track with a more prototypical look.

### True-Track Selection

As with any new product, Atlas is starting with a relatively small selection

of track pieces, and adding more each month with the intent of building up to a full line of True-Track. Our hands-on review covers 6-inch straights, 12.5-inch radius curves, and remote turnouts. Other True-Track pieces available or coming soon include a 6-inch rerailer, 2-inch and 1-inch straights, 11-inch radius curves, a 90-degree crossing, and track bumpers.

In my experience, sectional curved track is typically 30 degrees, using 12 sections form a complete circle, or 45 degrees, using 8 sections form a complete circle. The Atlas True-Track

curves released so far are actually 22.5 degrees and use 16 sections to form a complete circle. Be sure to keep this in mind when planning your True-Track layout. Atlas is known for their layout planning books, so watch for new releases specifically for True-Track.

### Using True-Track

As expected, True-Track goes together quickly and easily, not unlike regular Atlas sectional track. I was able to create a simple oval with passing track in a matter of minutes. To see how well a train would run on True-Track, I put together a consist of rolling stock from different N-scale companies and ran it through the layout "at speed" in both directions, both forward and backward. Often the true test of a turnout is its ability to handle trains backing through the points. The True-Track turnouts performed flawlessly in this regard.

All track samples were checked with the NMRA Standards Gauge and found to be within gauge; no problems here.

The track was assembled and disassembled several times, to see how well the roadbed clips would hold up. They performed well but if a clip breaks, be

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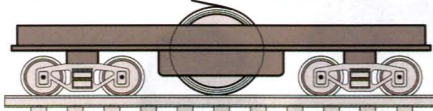
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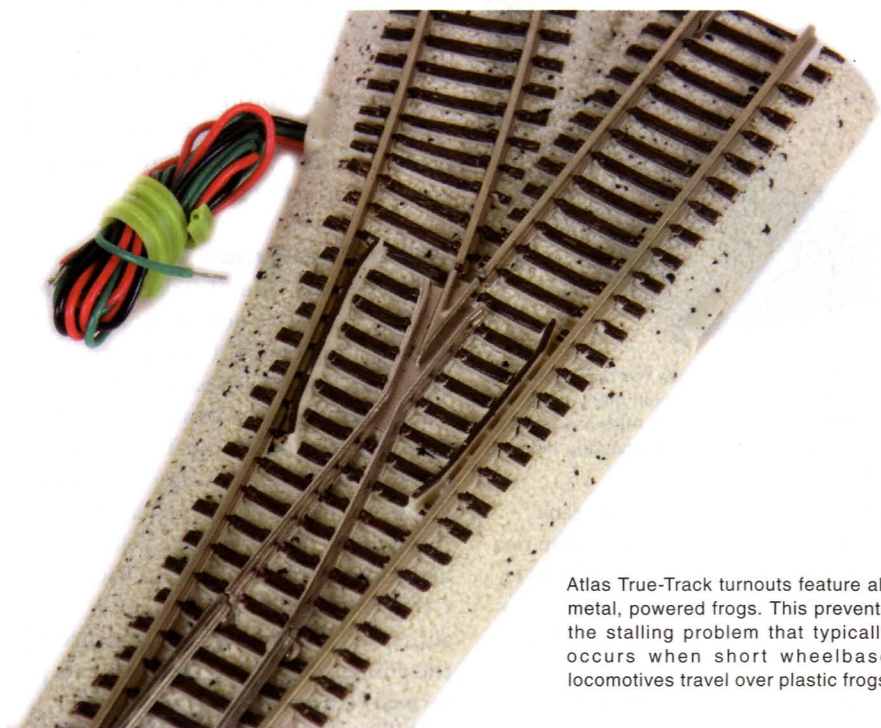
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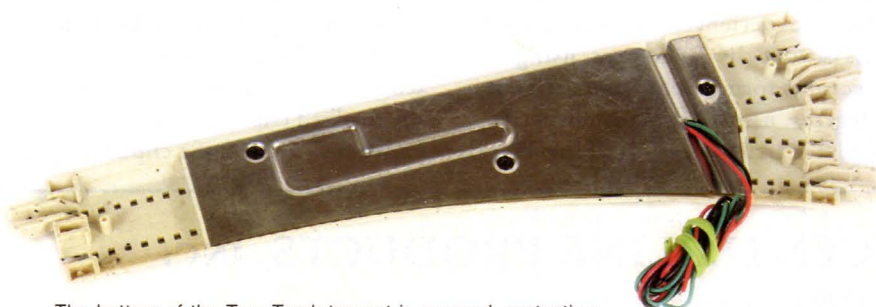
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Atlas True-Track turnouts feature all-metal, powered frogs. This prevents the stalling problem that typically occurs when short wheelbase locomotives travel over plastic frogs.



The bottom of the True-Track turnout is covered, protecting the throwing mechanism. Turnouts are remote controlled using the standard Atlas turnout controller, as well as thrown manually using the slider switch on the side of the roadbed.



Power hook-up requires the use of Atlas terminal joiners in place of the standard rail joiners. You'll need a small pair of needle-nose pliers to make the change.

advised it cannot be repaired. The track would still work, but the rail with the broken clip would depend on the holding power of the rail joiner.

True-Track turnouts can be controlled remotely using the standard Atlas turnout controller, as well as thrown manually using the slider switch on the side of the roadbed. These are AC solenoid turnouts, using three hookup wires; one to control each turnout position and one as common. True-Track turnouts also feature all-metal, powered frogs. This prevents the stalling problem that typically occurs when short wheelbase locomotives travel over plastic frogs. The turnouts are not power-routing, i.e., both routes are always powered regardless of turnout position.

While using True-Track only one difficulty was encountered, one covered by the assembly instructions packaged in the Trainman Train Set. When connecting two pieces of track together, sometimes one rail joiner would slide under the joining rail, instead of sliding onto it as intended. This would cause a "step change" at the rail joint, much like climbing up a step leading up to your porch. Since the rail is small you typically don't see this, but the train wheels know it's there. The Atlas instructions suggest lightly running your finger back and forth over each rail joint when assembling the track. If a rail joint has this problem, your finger will detect it quickly. At this point pull the joint apart, and reconnect it while slightly twisting the sections to ensure the rail joiners align with the rails before clicking the joint together.

## Closing Thoughts

As any veteran modeler will tell you, solid, reliable, trouble-free track is critical to a smooth-running railroad. There's nothing more frustrating and embarrassing than derailments during an operating session, or when showcasing the layout to visitors. The new True-Track line of N-scale sectional track from Atlas makes it easy to achieve great-looking and smooth-running track. It's comforting to know that after all these years Atlas continues to expand and improve their quality line of track products. Whether you set up your trains only at Christmastime or play with them all year round, pick up a selection of Atlas True-Track and enjoy prototypical looking track that's a snap to assemble!



# Two new signals from NJ International

HO — N.J. International, Inc has released two new signals. The PRR position light signal (#1045) is made of all-brass construction, has seven LED's, and features prototype headmounting. It retails for \$39.99.

The GRS SC type dwarf is made of all-brass construction, and features red and green LEDs. This signal is available in both silver (#1296) and black (#1297). The signal retails for \$24.99.

NJ International Inc., PO Box 1029, Higley, AZ 85236; 480-219-4135; Fax: 480-219-4138; E-mail: signals@njinternational.com; www.njinternational.com





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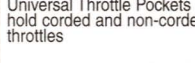
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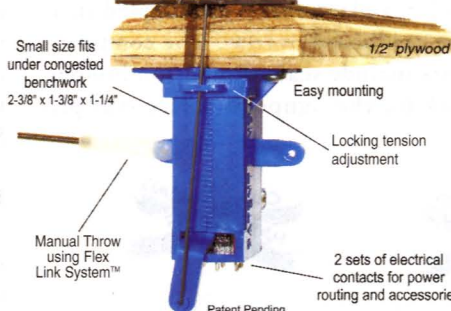
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# Tools, Details, & Finishing Products

**REVIEW** O, HO, & S

## Banta Railroad Signs: Don't Leave the Yard Without Them

Review and Photos by Pete Birdsong, MMR

BSC-6030 Right of Way Signs, O scale, MSRP: \$18.95

BSC-6031 Crossbucks, O scale, MSRP: \$10.95

BSC-4030 Right of Way Signs, S scale, MSRP: \$13.95

BSC-4031 Crossbucks, S scale, MSRP: \$7.95

BSC-2030 Right of Way Signs, HO scale, MSRP: \$11.95

BSC-2031 Crossbucks, HO scale, MSRP: \$6.95

Banta Modelworks  
421 Hopkins Road  
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Phone/Fax: 802-258-3869

[www.bantamodelworks.com](http://www.bantamodelworks.com)

**B**ANTA MODELWORKS offers two kits of railroad signs: one for ten crossbucks, and the other for a few crossbucks and many other sign types. With each kit selling for less than twenty dollars, they make ideal winter evening projects, adding lots of detail to the layout for not a lot of money or effort. The O-scale kits are reviewed in this article, but both kits are also available in S- and HO-scales.

### The Prototype

According to the instruction sheets, most of the signs are based on the Denver & Rio Grande Rail Road standards of 1907, but they are typical of those used by many other roads in many eras. A few represent more modern usage. For example, crossbucks and derail signs include both early and modern versions.

### The Kits

Both Banta sign kits come packaged in a plastic envelope stapled in a blue cardboard overlay. The components include scale-dimension lumber stock for the signposts, a laser-cut ply-

wood panel for the signboards, decals, and a two-sided, illustrated sheet of instructions. There is enough material in the crossbucks kit for ten crossbuck signs, and in the right-of-way kit for about fifty to sixty signs, depending on how many of the ones provided you can use in your situation.

### Assembly

The instructions were clear and complete, with tips on preparation, glues and finish, drawings of the completed signs, and numbered step-by-step instructions, including detailed steps for applying the decals. Some very helpful information on placement of the signs is also included in the instructions for each kit.

The basic assembly includes measuring and cutting the post material to the correct lengths, tapering the tops of the posts, removing and lightly sanding the signboards, and gluing the signboards to the posts. I found it helpful also to taper the post ends where they go into the scenery, to make it easier to insert them in my Homasote base. I think the same would be true inserting them into a Styrofoam base.

### Finish

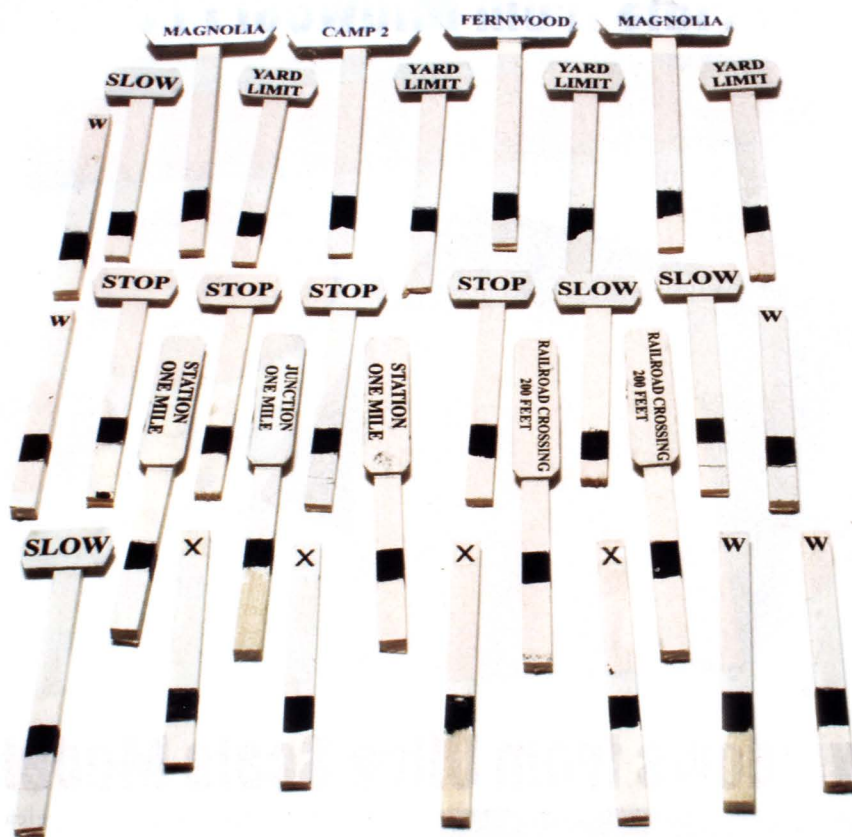
I elected to paint the posts and signboards before assembly. I used a water-based antique white, swabbing it onto the frets with wild abandon, where it conveniently flowed onto the edges. Only a little touch-up of a few edges was necessary on the completed signs. After painting the posts with the same antique white, I lightly marked with a pencil the lines for the locations of the black paint representing the creosote applied to the prototype about a foot above ground level, and ground level itself. I then painted a black stripe between the two marks, making it easy to insert the posts to the correct depth, after drilling slightly undersized holes in the Homasote.

I applied the high-resolution decals, as provided in the instructions, for all the signs except those for stations, since no decals are provided for them. I found a font on my computer similar to the one on the decals, and created station name signs in several

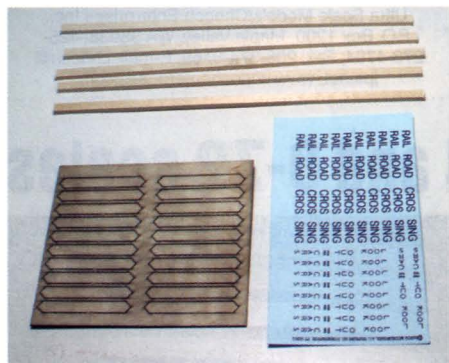


The completed crossbucks signs, with decals applied and the bottoms of most of the posts tapered for ease of inserting into the landscape material.





I got 35 signs from the Right of Way kit, since I elected not to use some of them. Boards and posts for station signs are included, but naturally not decals. The station signs above were created on a computer, printed on paper, and glued to the signboards.



The Crossbucks sign kit includes materials to make ten signs.

font sizes until I had them about the same size as the decals and then printed them out and glued them to the signboards. When the glue was dry, I sanded the edges with an emery board. These station signs make me appreciate all the more the quality of the decals provided in the kit. If doing it over, I think I'd try printing decals on the computer for the station signs, if for no other reason than to avoid the color clash between the paint and the paper.



A few of the sign types at the first stage of construction, mounting the sign board to the post, are shown here. The whistle sign does not have a signboard, since the sign is applied directly to the post. The posts have been marked at the base with two lines — the top one for the top of the black paint to represent the creosoted portion of the post, and the bottom one to indicate how far into the ground it goes.

### Final Thoughts

Well-done instructions and quality components make these easy kits to build, and they add a lot of detail to the layout for very little investment in either time or money. Planning and placing them around the layout is as much fun as building them, so you get double the fun.

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## New cork building materials from Midwest Products

**ALL SCALES** — Midwest Products has released their newest building material Project Cork. It is made of re-cycled cork, and is available in circles, squares, and sheets. The following are the available products: two circles (#3034) 3/8-inch by 7-1/2 inches diameter for \$7.99; six circles (#3038) 1/8-inch by 3-3/4 inches diameter for \$3.99; two squares natural (#3041) 3/16- by 12- by 12-inches, for \$9.99, two dark squares (#3043) 3/8- by 12- by 12-inches for \$12.99; one cork roll (#3045) 1/16- by 24- by 48-inches, for \$10.99; four cork stoppers (#3047) for \$3.99; twelve cork stoppers (#3047) for \$3.99; and four cork sheets (#3048) 1/32- by 8-1/2- by 11-inches for \$8.99.

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## New replacement windows from Ultra Scale Models



**O** — Ultra Scale Models has released new flush laser-cut replacement windows for Golden Gate Models P-70 coaches. The windows (#651) retail for \$20.00 per set.

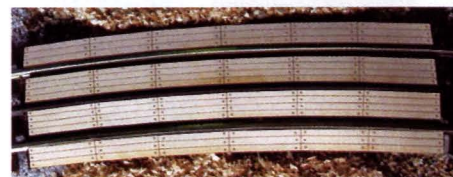
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## New curved grade crossing for O-54 and O-72 scales

**O-54 & O-72** — Scale University has released wood plank, laser-cut grade crossings for curved track, available for both two-rail and three-rail modelers. These etched grade crossings show the planking and the spike heads, and are available in

two sets per package for \$19.95. Also available are the grade crossings for straight track for \$17.95 per pair.

Scale University, 196 Cider Hill Rd, Exeter, ME  
04435-3012; 207-379-4731; E-mail: [clarkde@tds.net](mailto:clarkde@tds.net);  
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# Model Tech Studios releases new line of architectural materials



Model Tech Studios is offering a new line of Architectural Material. HO-scale Brick Style 1 sample shown.

**MULTI-SCALE** — Model Tech Studios is offering a new selection of Architectural Materials in both unaged and old/weathered styles. This new line of laser-cut wood materials is designed to "Bridge the gap for layout modelers, layout designers, and laser-cutting manufacturers."

Model Tech Studios introduced their new 3-D Material Line of wood and other materials as a time saver. According to the company, the new system is a 1-piece system that is simply hand-cut or laser-cut for the design and will allow modelers to scratch build sidewalks and buildings without having to laminate roofing/siding materials onto backer

sheets. They are currently offering the following: Brick Style 1, a 24-inch long by 6-inch wide sheet of standard brick suitable for use on HO, S, and O structures, for \$12.99; Stone Block Style 1, a 24-inch long by 6-inch wide sheet of standard brick suitable for use on N/HO or S/O, also for \$12.99; and weathered/peeling paint siding wood sheets (24-inches long by 6-inches wide) suitable for multiple scales for \$12.99. Other material includes aged/cracked cement in multiple scales for \$9.99.

Model Tech Studios plans on adding to their selection over the coming weeks and months. Visit their web site and click on the "Building Solutions" link on the right-hand side of the page for images and pricing to see all their Architectural Material products. Or contact the company at the information listed below.

Model Tech Studios, P.O. Box 1497, N. Hampton, NH 03862; 603-964-5995; E-mail: mtsts@hotmail.com; www.modeltechstudios.com

# New state and Nascar license plates from Howard's Hobby

**HO** — Howard's Hobby has new license plates that are available for the following states; Illinois (1960 to present), Hawaii (1940 to present), Alaska (1960 to present), and Nascar license plates for West Virginia for the following drivers: 2 RUSTY, 3DALE, 6 MARTIN, 8 DALE JR, 17 MATT, 24 GORDON, 28 RUDD, 88 DJ (UPS), 88 DJ (Ford Credit). Each state package includes enough plates to do at least 20 vehicles, the Nascar packages feature two plates for each driver listed. The plates retail for \$1.50 per package, which includes shipping.

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## Heritage Lane has a new series of building fronts.

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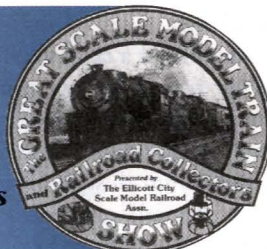


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## REVIEW Software

### Designing a layout with sectional track gets even easier!

Review and Photos by Phil Scandura

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**M**ANY model railroaders get their start using sectional track, whether it's around the Christmas tree, on the dining room table, or snaking around the floor of their bedroom. Numerous layout books have been published, each showing different layouts that can be built quickly and easily with sectional track. There are even a few software packages that help you design your own layout. Some are Computer Aided Design (CAD) packages that provide extensive power and flexibility, yet require a considerable learning curve. Others are simple to use, but provide only a few features. Then there are those somewhere in-between, offering powerful design features, yet are easy to use. AnyRail Layout Design Software, from DRail Modelspoor Software, is one such package.

Designed by a software engineer and model railroader, AnyRail started out as a personal tool to help design a home layout. Eventually it was posted on the Internet and adopted by several Dutch users in the Netherlands. Over the past two years its popularity has spread: it is now enjoyed by users in Europe, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

As noted by David Hoogvorst, the designer and author of AnyRail, "The

success of our software probably comes from its ease of use. We aim to make it really easy to create a first design, simply by dragging and dropping the track that you need. We also provide a large number of predefined track libraries, where each part is carefully measured and checked to make sure it represents its real counterpart as well as possible."

Indeed the track libraries are extensive, including product lines from many manufacturers including Aristo-Craft, Arnold, Atlas, Bachmann, Fleischmann, Hornby, Kato, LGB, Lima, Lionel, Märklin, Micro-Trains, Minitrix, Peco, Roco, Tillig, Trix, and Walthers/Shinohara. AnyRail includes more track libraries than any other layout design package that I've seen. In fact, AnyRail even handles flex track!

The track scales currently supported include HO/OO, N, Z, G/I, TT, and O. Missing from this list is S scale, one which I hope will be added in the future (even S scale enjoys sectional track offered by several different manufacturers).

According to David, AnyRail updates are released every month or so, typically adding new track libraries with each release. So be sure to check the homepage of the AnyRail web site for the complete list of supported track brands and scales!

#### Installation Requirements

As noted on the AnyRail web site, the program has been tested on Windows 2000, Windows XP, and Windows Vista; it is not compatible with older versions, such as Windows 95/98/ME. For this review, Version 3.19.0 was tested on a Dell laptop running Windows XP Professional. AnyRail is currently available via web site download only.

You can download a trial version of AnyRail for free, enabling you to create layouts containing up to 50 sections of track. Once you're convinced AnyRail is the layout design program for you, order the full version for \$59.00 and receive a license key (you don't even have to reinstall the software). With a purchase of the licensed version you get the ability to design

layouts of unlimited size; free e-mail support; free updates as they are released; and a free upgrade to version 4 once it's available.

The download size for AnyRail is approximately 3.5 megabytes and once installed on your computer, the software consumes just under 8 megabytes of disk space. Two files are installed, the program file and user's manual. All typical Windows conventions have been followed, giving it the classic look and feel of Windows software. It does not, however, use on-screen help menus. Instead a fully indexed and searchable Adobe PDF version of the user's manual is loaded during the install.

In terms of warranty, AnyRail comes with an unconditional, no questions asked, 30-day money-back guarantee.

#### Start With the Tutorial

As with any software package, there are typically three ways to begin. Some choose to read the user's manual from cover to cover. Others choose to work through a tutorial to get their feet wet. While still others shun the manual and tutorial, choosing instead to start playing on their own. Frankly I am one of those that like to jump right in and see what works and what doesn't. It helps me get a feel for how intuitive and easy to use the software package might be. Without a doubt, AnyRail makes it easy to start designing your layout in just a matter of minutes. Just take a look at the quick and dirty Märklin I scale layout I created for fun.

Of course, to truly get a feel for the various features and capabilities of AnyRail you'll want to work through the two tutorials provided. The first teaches you how to create a simple 4 by 6 foot layout; refer to the screen shots included in this review to learn about the AnyRail features taught by this tutorial.

The second tutorial teaches you how to work with flex track. AnyRail makes it easy to create precise curves and easements using flex track. It even includes a configurable warnings feature that lets you know if the flex has been stretched too long (in which case you need to add another section) or bent into too sharp of a radius.

AnyRail also includes a limited



assortment of accessory libraries, such as turntables, structures, and signals that can be placed on the layout diagram.

## Suggested Improvements

It is not uncommon for me to find software bugs or anomalies when reviewing software packages for *Model Railroad News*. It is uncommon, however, to find a software package without bugs, as in the case of AnyRail. Try as I might to break it, I'm happy to report that everything worked as documented. Of course, if you find a bug or have a problem, be sure to report it via the web site. With new releases coming out on a regular basis, chances are it will be fixed fast.

Even bug-free software can have room for improvements, and I do have a few suggestions for AnyRail that I believe would make it even easier to use:

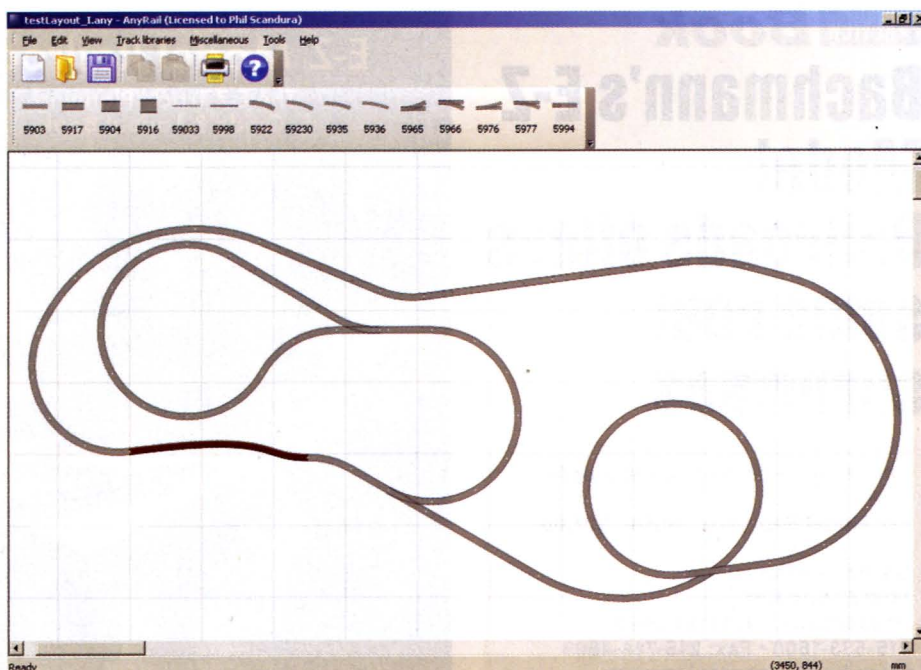
1. It would be helpful to include an Adobe PDF version of both tutorials that can be downloaded from the web site, or included with the software installation. This would eliminate the need to be connected to the Internet when using the tutorials.

2. The toolbars could be enhanced to include the "View/Scale" control as icons, instead of just under the menus. This would make it even easier to zoom in and out without needing to navigate the menus (you can use the mouse wheel to do this, but the zoom setting isn't displayed).

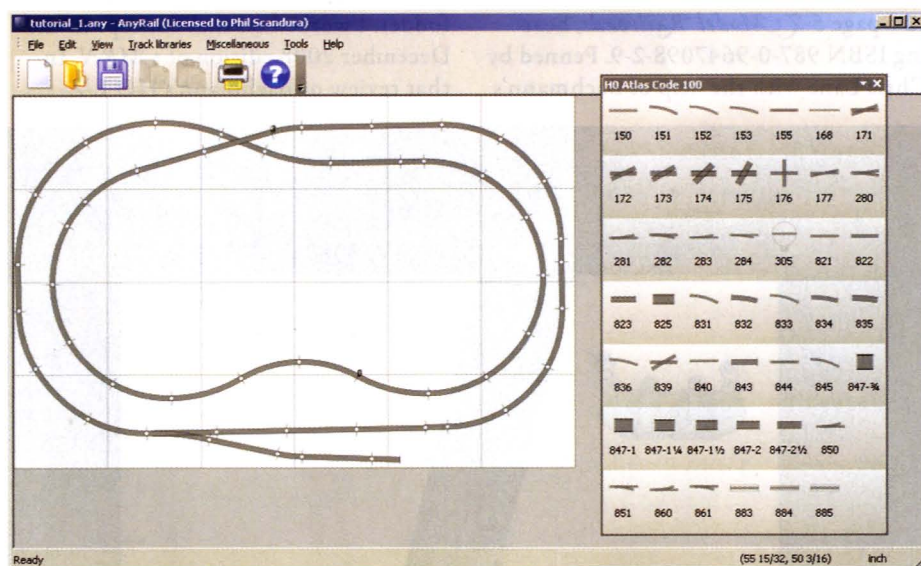
3. Add the display of the current Table Size to the status bar and the Track Library Name to the track sections bar.

4. AnyRail doesn't save the current Track Library tool bar setting with the layout file. That means if you created a layout in HO Atlas Code 100, for example, then later created one in N Kato Unitrack, when you reopened the HO layout it would still display the N library tool bar.

5. The materials list generated by AnyRail doesn't include a print feature; instead you must copy/paste the list into a word processor or spreadsheet program. It would be nice to add a print feature to the print menu as well. That way you can print the layout diagram and materials list from AnyRail, without needing to use some other program.



Often times I begin by playing around with a program before reading the users manual or tutorial; here's an example layout that took about 15 minutes of dragging and dropping to create. This happens to use the Märklin I scale track library, but I could have chosen any one of numerous libraries to experiment with. If you're wondering about the colored track section near the lower left, it represents a piece of flex track that I "bent" to complete the connection.



Here is the completed layout created by the first tutorial. Start to finish took less than 30 minutes, including adjusting tolerances and creating grades. Of course, I already knew what the final layout would look like, so recreating it in AnyRail was a simple process of dragging and dropping track sections to match the tutorial layout. When creating your own layout from scratch, it will undoubtedly take longer, as you experiment with different track configurations. Keep in mind therein lays the beauty of AnyRail; you can design an entire layout and try out different ideas without actually purchasing any track! Once you have the layout design finalized, AnyRail will generate a shopping list of all necessary track parts, ready to take with you to the local hobby shop.

6. Add S-scale track libraries from companies such as S-Helper Service, American Models, and Tomalco Track, to name but a few.

## Closing Thoughts

AnyRail is easy to use and provides many features that enable you to create your dream layout in a relatively

short time. With so many track libraries and scales supported, AnyRail should appeal to just about anyone designing a layout with sectional track. Feel free to download the evaluation copy and give AnyRail a try. I'm sure you'll agree it's the easiest, and perhaps the most fun, layout design package available.



# Bachmann's E-Z Model Railroads offers some real surprises

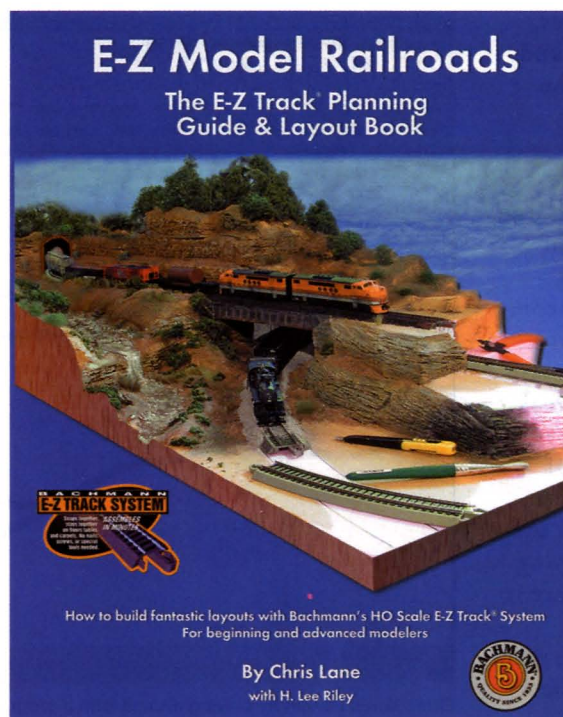
Review and Photos by John Sipple

E-Z Model Railroads, MSRP: \$21.00

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**T**HE E-Z Track Planning Guide & Layout Book. That's the subtitle for the softbound, 8.5 x 11 inch, 124-page *E-Z Model Railroads*, bearing ISBN 987-0-9647098-2-9. Penned by Chris Lane with the help of Bachmann's

vice president of product development, H. Lee Riley, we are offered the notion that E-Z Track is more than train set fodder. I worked on that concept in the December 2008 edition of *MRN*. In that review of Bachmann's HO E-Z



Track turnouts with built-in decoders, I found it necessary to actually change the outer loop of our test layout into E-Z Track. The results have been excellent.

The book, of course, touts the track and accessories that come with it, but this isn't just a book of possible layouts, though it has them, too. This is more about how to plan and execute a well-done layout, employing E-Z Track. You could take all of this and do it with regular flex-track-on-cork construction, but that misses the point.

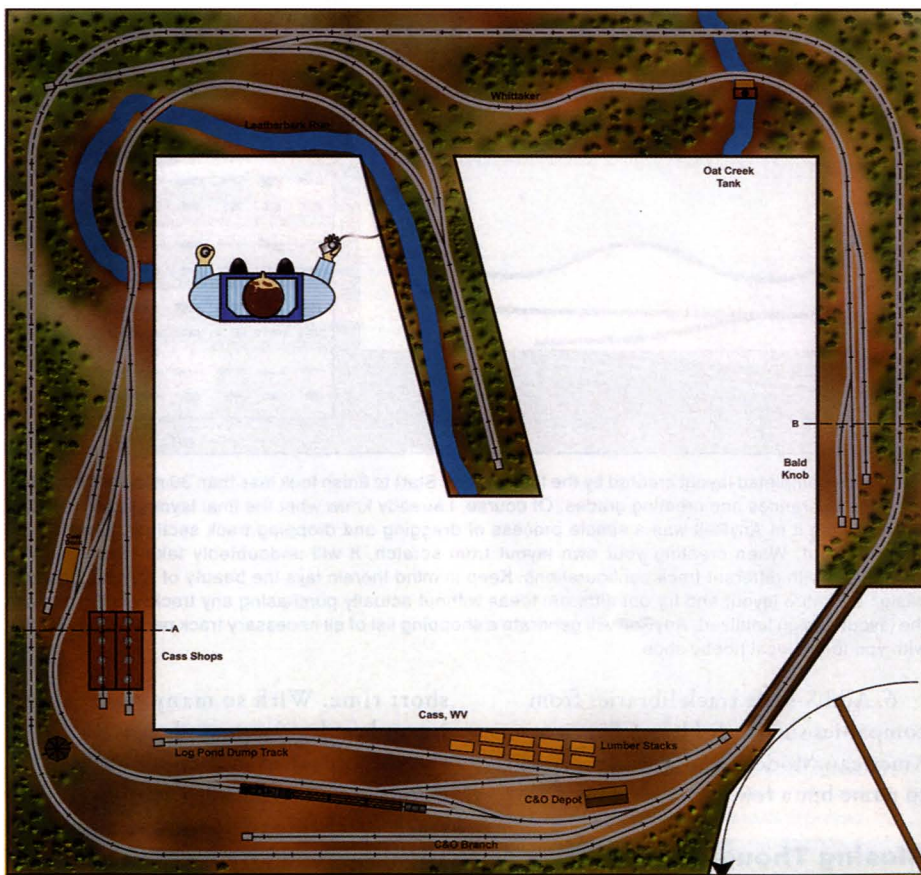
In the book you'll find the assertion that flex track is very dependent upon solid benchwork such that shifting and drifting doesn't take place. But

it does. Our test layout was laid originally on 3/4-inch plywood resting on a solid, braced 2x4 frame. I can literally get up on this layout and tap dance on it. Unfortunately, changing temperatures, curing wood, and settling building have altered the alignment of the wood. The book suggests that using E-Z Track will reduce the impact of this.

Most of what you would like to do with a layout can be done using E-Z Track. The plastic roadbed gets buried in ballast and landscaping until all you can see are the ties and rails, pretty much how tracks always are. As a general rule, I like the geometry of the roadbed profile better than that of cork, and I know guys who pile the cork two layers high for that reason.

The book's chapters tell us a lot about the organization of it. They are "Getting Started," "Layout Style, Location, and Construction," "Wiring Your Layout and Other Electrical Matters," "Track Basics," and "Track Planning." Chapters 6 through 11 take us through six previously-unpublished track plans, and then we get chapters on "Scenery & Landscaping," and "Weathering." Four appendices share with us twenty good, basic layouts they have published before plus Track Symbols, some Additional Advanced Layouts, and a listing of E-Z Track products.

About that last issue, Bachmann does not offer curved or double-slip switches, railroad-type bridges, or turn-



This is the overhead view of the Cass Scenic Railway. Note the two switchbacks, one that employs the center room extension while the other actually projects over the C&O tracks below, though that loop is actually on a lower shelf for the dotted line part of its journey.



tables. They have their Plasticville line of structures to help decorate your layout, and the rest of the industry would be happy to supply what Bachmann does not. Over time and with some experience, you'll learn how to knit other track and accessories into your E-Z Track layout.

The book's new layouts deserve some attention. The HO-Iowa Central uses stacked foam insulation. This has the advantage of being both solid for the track and able to be excavated to put in below-track-level details such as rivers or streams. This is a simple loop layout with some additional trackage just for the fun of it. There is a complete list of track supplies needed and suggestions for loco and rolling stock. This also includes hints for modeling a plowed field.

The HO-Time Saver is a switching puzzle for shelf or table-top layouts. Many model railroaders just love switching layouts, and this requires only a few cars and a small loco such as an 0-6-0T tank steamer or a 44 ton diesel. This layout will also work for On30 trains. I see no reason this layout couldn't also be reduced for use with N-scale E-Z Track. In any scale, this yard scene could be in a larger layout and decorated with buildings and other things.

The Pelican Cove is an HO layout based on a simple HO loop, but this one features grades created by using Woodland Scenics' one-inch risers. This layout explored a water feature, that being the bay, and the book details how to go about that sort of modeling. The On30-scale Midwest Quarry & Mining Company takes us further into grades and how to make them both reasonable and smooth. We find out how to kit-bash a Bachmann O-scale bridge into a specific prototype as mountainous backdrops appear. This is another switching layout and is wired in five DC blocks. Bet I know a DCC cure for that!

The HO-scale Northeast Corridor is just the opposite of a slow-speed switch-

ing layout. You can build it modularly, introducing the new model railroader to modular layout construction. Rather than having the entire layout being constructed, you create one section at a time, allowing you to finish it and enjoy it as you expand to the next module.

For me, the top project is the Cass Scenic Railway. This layout could be done by any dedicated beginner, but to do it almost exactly as they have set it up, it would require a space of 12 x 12 feet. While it employs old geared locomotives and logging operations for years of switching fun,

there is also an interconnection with the C&O, giving you a loop where you can run mainline equipment, too.

Perhaps the most intriguing detail of this layout is the two switchbacks used by the Cass to reach the top of Bald Knob. You have actually two railroads in one layout, though they interconnect. You get the dual switchbacks, point-to-point old time logging road and the modern, continuous loop track for non-stop operation. It's a lot to build and more to enjoy. This one layout, alone, is worth the price of the book. 

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RR-32561



RR-32562



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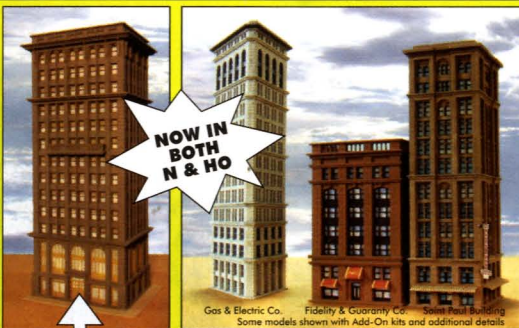
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# PROJECT DCC PROJECT

## Project DCC - Integrating Operation and Automation Part 8, Integrating a Grade Crossing

— By Phil Scandura

Last month we added trackside signals for operating realism, using the previously installed block detection system. This month we'll modify one of the layout blocks to add control of grade crossing signals, protecting our driving public from oncoming trains.

### Stop, Look and Listen

As children many of us remember the mantra posted at every railroad crossing, "Stop, Look, Listen." In the days before warning bells, flashing lights, and gates all one could do was stop at the crossing, look both ways, and listen for the sound of an oncoming train. While good advice, its effectiveness depended upon the driver or pedestrian actually following it. And as trains got faster and the roadways more crowded with drivers in

a hurry, more effective and automated ways of protection had to be found. Perhaps the first automated protective device, the Wigwag was introduced in 1909 by Southern California's Pacific Electric interurban streetcar railroad, as their answer to a safer railroad grade crossing. Today complete grade crossing protection includes warning bells, flashing light, and gates, all achievable on model railroad layouts with the addition of a grade crossing controller.

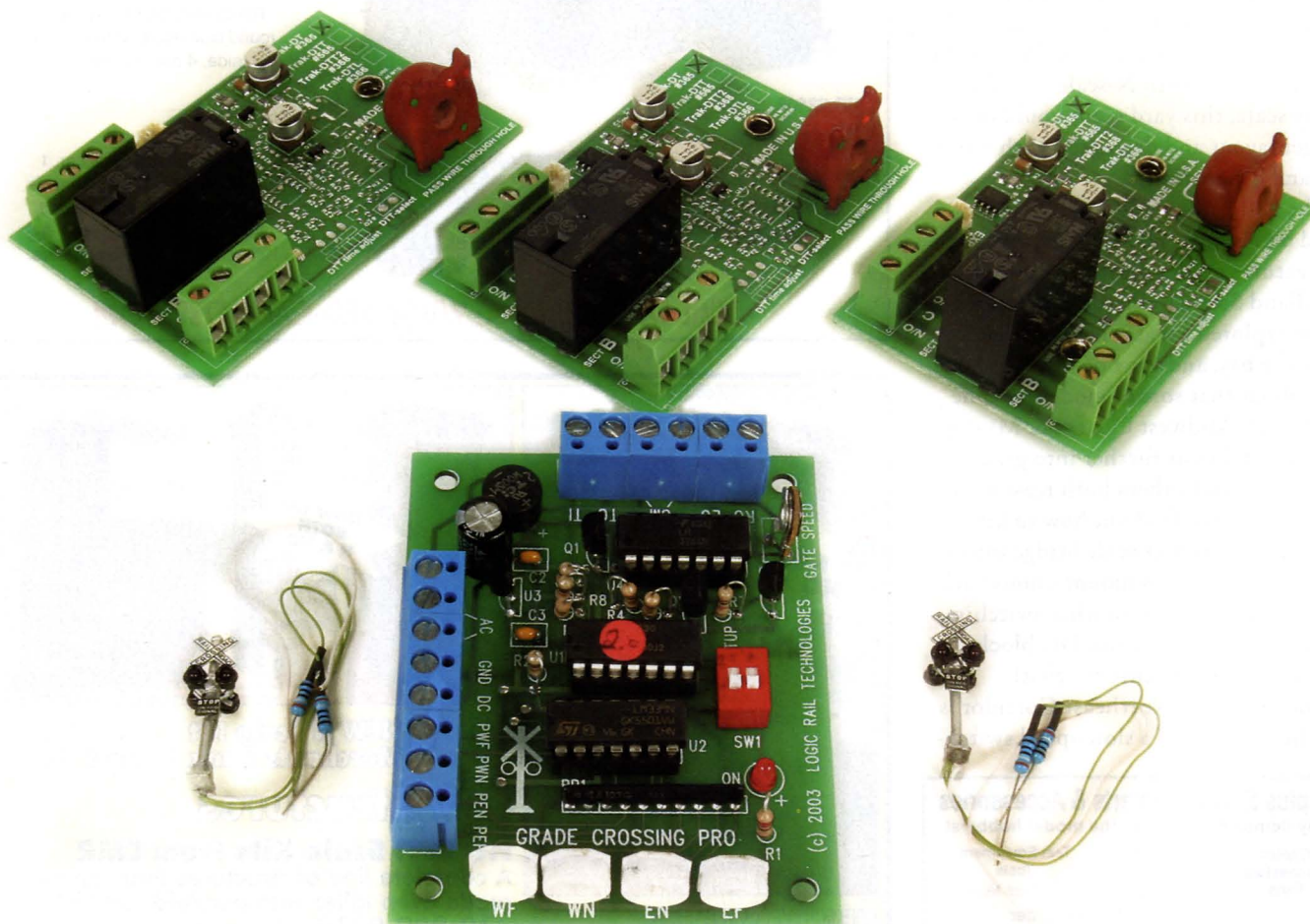
### Grade Crossing Pro

One of the various products offered by Logic Rail Technologies is **Grade Crossing Pro**, specifically designed to trigger warning bells, flash lights, and drive crossing gate motors. Applicable to all modeling scales, Grade Crossing Pro uses photocells to detect trains, first

flashing the signal lights, then after a delay turning on the crossing motors and triggering an external sound board, if so equipped. Grade Crossing Pro provides adjustable crossing motor speed and detector sensitivity, using a special setup mode. It can also support infrared emitters and detectors in place of photocells, as well as current-sensing detectors. All of these options are discussed in the Grade Crossing Pro instructions and application notes available on their web site.

### Block 9

For Project DCC we chose to add grade crossing signals to block 9 (see **Figure 1**), identified during the planning stages to ensure it was large enough. As discussed early in the



Seen here is everything we'll need to add grade crossing signals. The heart of the system is Grade Crossing Pro from Logic Rail Technologies (center). Applicable to all modeling scales, it can trigger warning bells, flash lights, and drive crossing gate motors. Grade Crossing Pro includes photocells for train

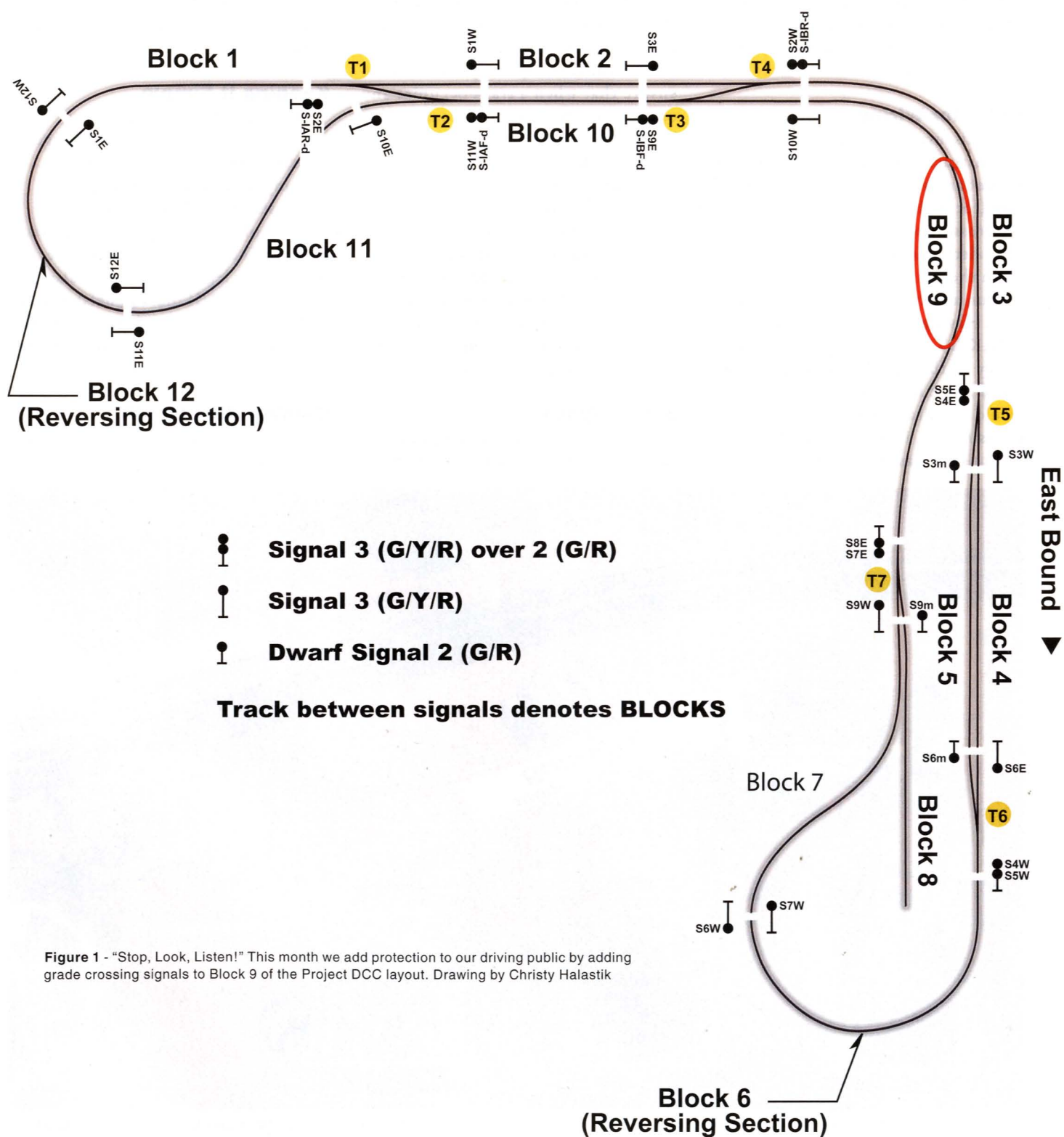
detection; however, we've chosen to use the Dallee TRAK-DT block detectors used elsewhere on the Project DCC layout. For N-scale crossings we're using NJ International exact scale crossings. Grade Crossings are crucial for protecting auto and pedestrian traffic from on-coming trains.



Interlocking A

Interlocking B

◀ West Bound





# PROJECT DCC PROJECT

Project DCC series, our block sizes are rather small, to accommodate very short trains for demonstration purposes. Even though block 9 is the largest block, the portion dedicated to the grade crossing area should be larger. Regardless, it suits our demonstration purposes nicely.

## Detector Wiring

As discussed in the Grade Crossing Pro instructions, the detection area consists of an east and west approach section (for bi-directional operation) and the crossing section. The use of photocells alerts the Grade Crossing Pro logic when the train enters the approach section and traverses the crossing section. Having already used the Dallee TRAK-DT detectors for block occupancy on the right leg of the layout, we asked Logic Rail Technologies if they would be suitable for use with Grade Crossing Pro, instead of the photocells. The answer was yes, and as shown in

**Figure 2** the wiring is relatively simple, thanks to the relay contacts provided by the TRAK-DT.

The one wrinkle, due to the limited size of our blocks, is that the grade crossing sections are a part of block 9, rather than individual blocks on their own. Consequently, we need to ensure that when a train occupies any of the crossing sections it causes all of block 9 to appear occupied. To do so we've fed the crossing section detectors from the block 9 power feeder (as shown in Figure 2). On a larger layout (such as your own), you may choose to enlarge each crossing section and declare them as individual blocks. In that case, each detector would do double-duty, driving the trackside signals for that block and the applicable Grade Crossing Pro section.

## Signal Types

Grade Crossing Pro is designed to support LED or incandescent bulb

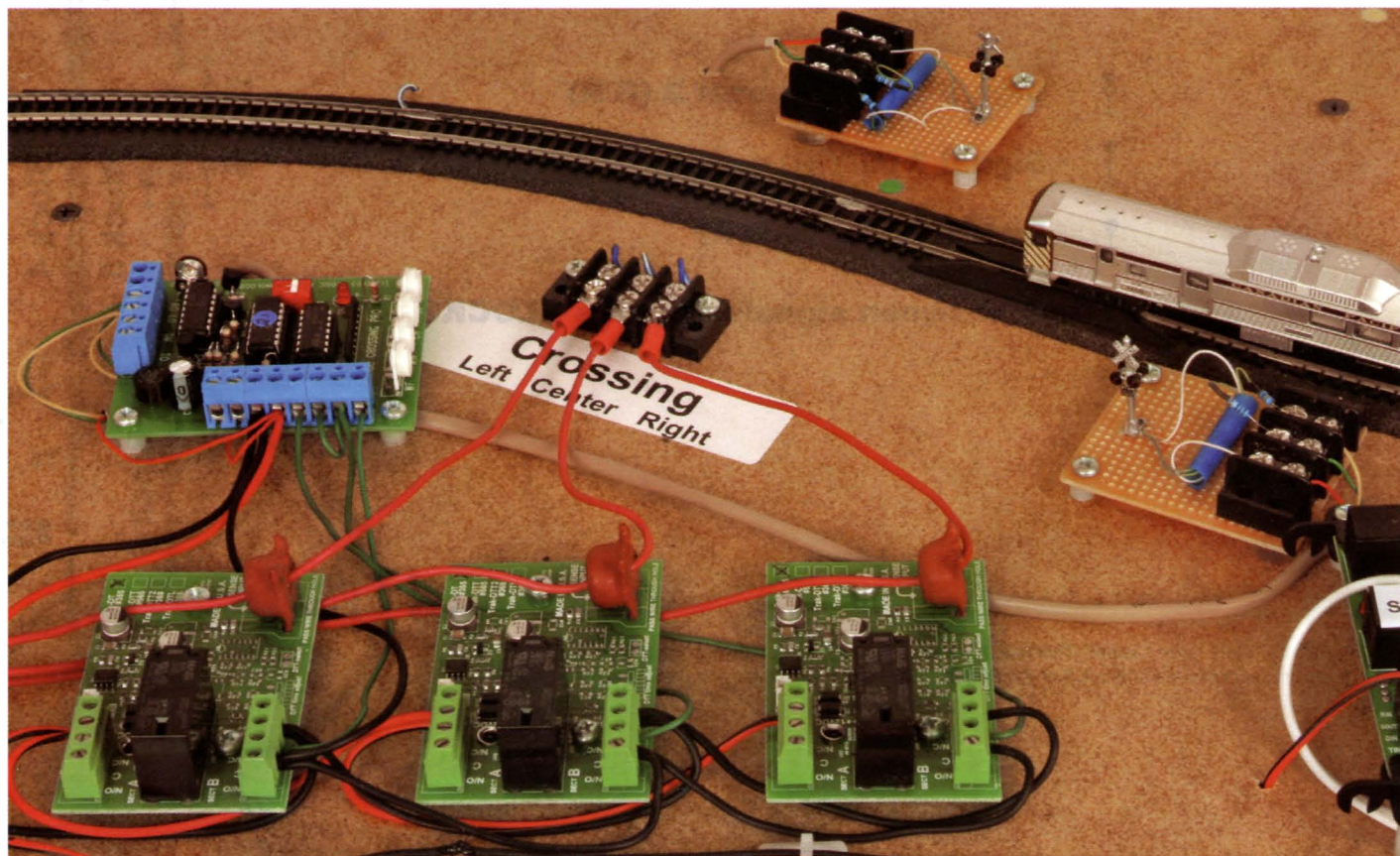
signals. The NJI crossbucks used for Project DCC are of the LED type, wired in a common anode fashion, which means the common wire is "positive" and each LED wire is "negative." This type works perfectly with Grade Crossing Pro.

## Keeping It Simple

While Grade Crossing Pro can drive crossing gate motors and trigger an external sound board to produce a warning bell, the only functionality demonstrated on Project DCC is the flashing of crossing signals, using exact scale, LED crossbucks from NJI (recall that the left leg of our layout is also signaled with NJI brass signals). If you wish to add the gate and sound features, feel free to do so by following the Grade Crossing Pro instructions.

## Coming Next Month

This month we added grade crossing signals, helping to protect our



Shown here is the completed installation (the Block 9 detector shown in Figure 2 is out of the photo to the left). The two boards with crossbucks are from NJ International. Across the bottom are the three TraK DT with the left being the East Approach, center the Crossing Section, and the right is the West Approach. Logic Rail Technologies' Grade Crossing Pro is above on the left. The approach

and crossing sections are undersized due to space constraints on our demonstration layout. On a larger layout it would be better to enlarge each section, declaring them as individual blocks. Then use the TRAK-DT to drive the trackside signals for that block and triggering the associated Grade Crossing Pro section.



# CT DCC PROJECT DCC

driving public from harm. Please join me next month as our Project DCC series nears the culmination of the project, namely the addition of computer automation. Discussed over three installments, we'll first explore the basic concepts of computer control, following up with manual control, and finally full layout automation. See you then!

## Mentioned in this Column:

TRAK-DT Basic Detector; MSRP: \$29.95

### Dallee Electronics, Inc.

246 West Main St  
Leola, PA 17540  
Phone/Fax: 717-661-7041  
[www.dallee.com](http://www.dallee.com)

Grade Crossing Pro; MSRP: \$42.95

### Logic Rail Technologies

PMB #287 21175 Tomball Parkway

Houston, TX 77070

281-251-5813

[www.logicrailtech.com](http://www.logicrailtech.com)

N-Scale Crossbucks, one pair; MSRP: \$32.99

### NJ International

P. O. Box 1029

Higley, AZ 85236

480-219-4135

Fax: 480-219-4138

[www.njinternational.com](http://www.njinternational.com)

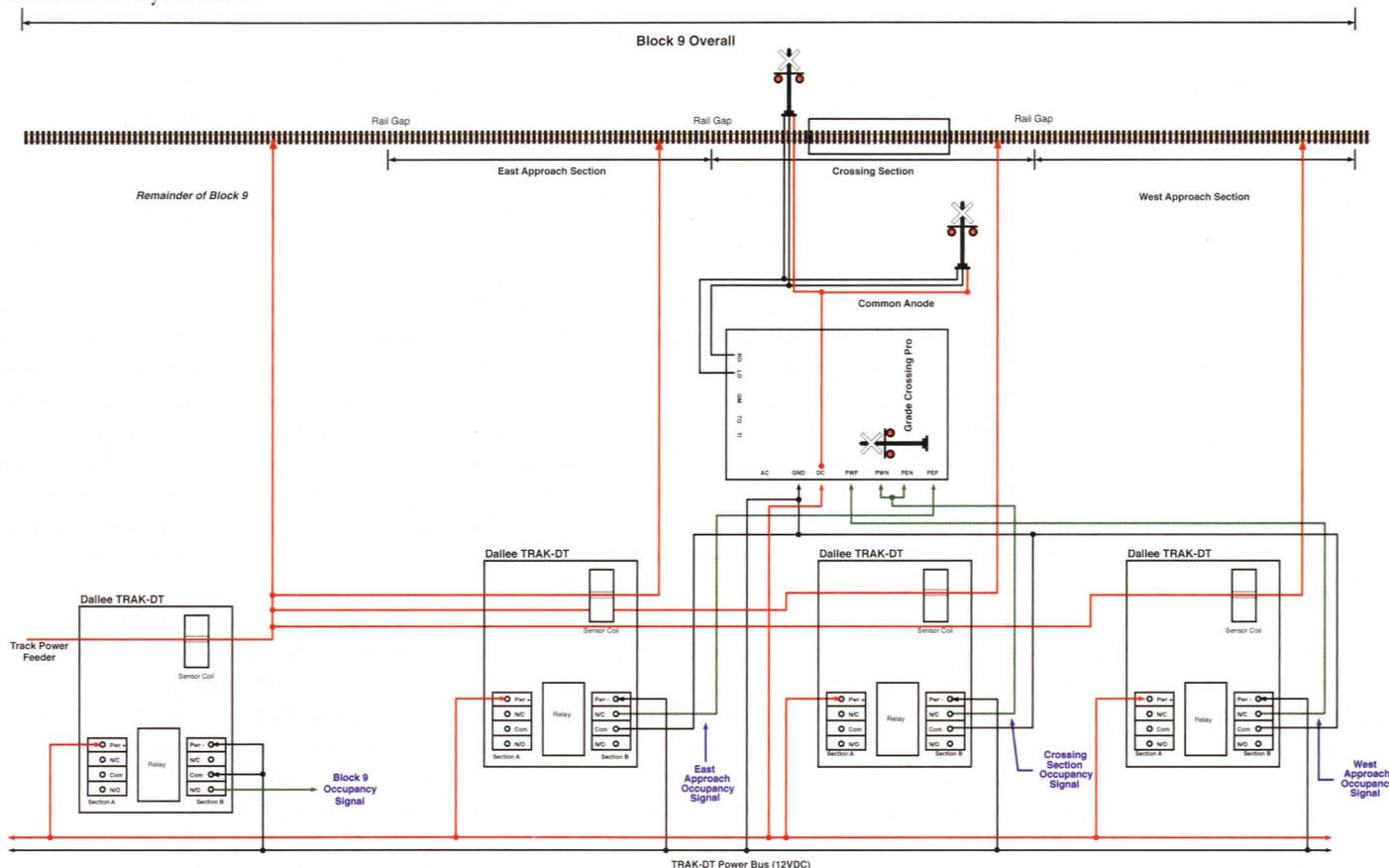


**Figure 2** - Using TRAK-DT detectors in place of photocells with Grade Crossing Pro is easy. Simply connect the N/C (normally closed) contact from the appropriate TRAK-DT to the related photocell input on Grade Crossing Pro. The COM contact (common) from each TRAK-DT relay connects to the GND (ground) terminal on Grade Crossing Pro. In operation when no train is present the TRAK-DT relay will be un-energized, which means that the N/C and COM

contacts are connected. This appears as a grounded photocell input, analogous to light shining on the photocell (i.e., no train). When a train is present the TRAK-DT relay will be energized, opening the N/C and COM contacts. This appears as an open circuit, analogous to a dark photocell of infinite resistance (i.e., a train is present). Drawing by Christy Halastik



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# Miniature Dreams

IF YOU'RE ever out in the Los Angeles area, head north of the city to Burbank. On South Victory Boulevard, between West Alameda and West Valencia, is **Burbank's House of Hobbies**, one of my favorite sources of scale vehicles. The folks at Burbank's are always on top of the market and the service is outstanding.

Just before Christmas, they recently came through with a model for which I had been waiting nearly eight months: the Redline Ferrari 512 S Modulo in HO scale. This gave me an interesting idea of how to incorporate a unique model on a standard HO-scale layout. But first, a little history.

The Modulo was a concept car designed in the late 1960s by Paolo Martin of the famous Pininfarina Studios. The radical, UFO-like, 36.8-inch-tall body was added to one of 25 Ferrari 512 S chassis built for homologation purposes. The completed car made its debut at the Geneva Auto Show in 1970 and took the world by storm, winning several international design prizes. Even today, almost four decades later, the sleek Modulo can draw a crowd when it is on display.

The Modulo is a functional car in most respects. It has a five-liter V12 engine that produces 550 horsepower, a five-speed transmission and a complete, if Spartan, interior with red-and-black seats. It's all set to go very fast, but only in a straight line. That's because the front wheel skirts, while they add to the car's striking appearance, don't provide enough room to

allow for steering and must be removed when the car is driven.

Even with that major drawback, the Modulo is one of my favorite concept cars of all time and I am delighted to see it in HO scale, especially as a **Redline** model.

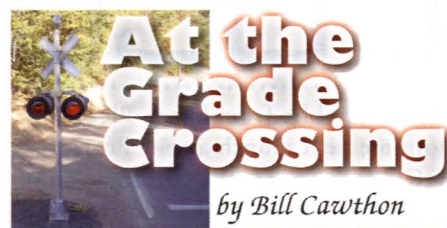
Redline is one of three brands of ready-to-run scale models produced by **Minimax Import & Export** and imported by **Minichamps North America**. Redline was set up specifically to produce licensed replicas of Ferrari automobiles. The models are assembled from a variety of materials, including injection-molded plastic, resin, and photo-etched metal, and the attention to detail is almost obsessive. The companies have been producing models in larger scales for a few years, but just entered the 1:87-scale market in 2007.

The Redline Modulo is a beautifully rendered replica of the full-size car. The calipers show it to be within a scale inch of published specs for the prototype and many of the distinctive features of the Modulo, like the engine cover with its 24 holes and the distinctive red beltline stripe, are accurately reproduced.

The panel lines and tooling are exquisite, the glass is flush with the body, and the detailed engine with its trademark red heads is visible through the engine cover. Even the unique, low-profile headlights are accurately replicated.

The paint and printing are world-class, in keeping with the rest of the model.

All in all, it is a most impressive repro-



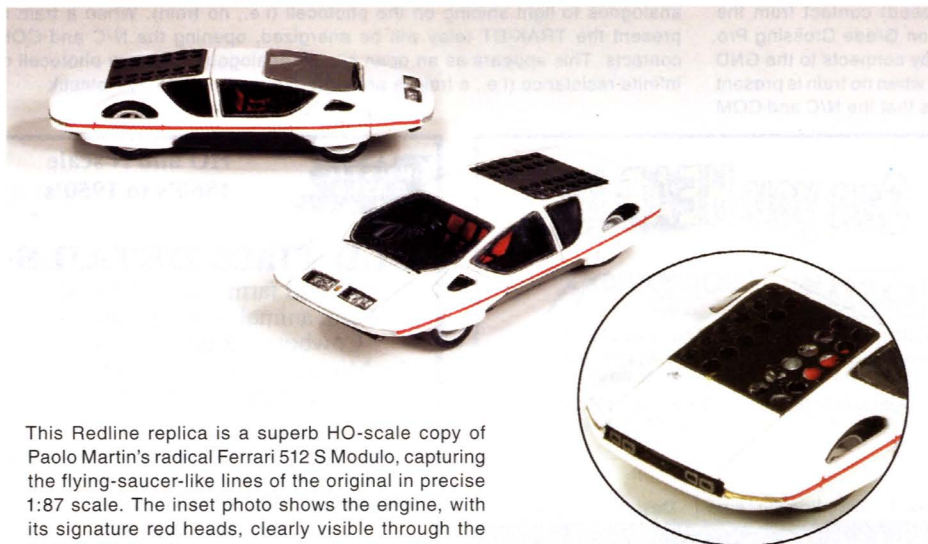
duction of the full-size car. Some real craftsmanship went into this model.

I have been a fan of concept, or "dream," cars since I was a little boy growing up in Detroit. My first encounter with them came when I was about five and my Dad took me to the Ford Rotunda to visit Santa. (Hey! This was Detroit, what would you expect?) While I didn't understand why Santa wasn't at Chrysler, where Dad worked, I had my moment to tell the jolly old man in red my heart's desires and then Dad and I went to look at the cars.

In among the various Fords, Mercurys, and Lincolns were wondrous creations that looked like they had sprung straight from one of the "Life in the Year 2000" articles in the Sunday supplements. Bubble tops, sleek bodies, and fins that would have made an F-100 Super Sabre green with envy. I was hooked; drawn into an optimistic chrome future I still find fascinating.

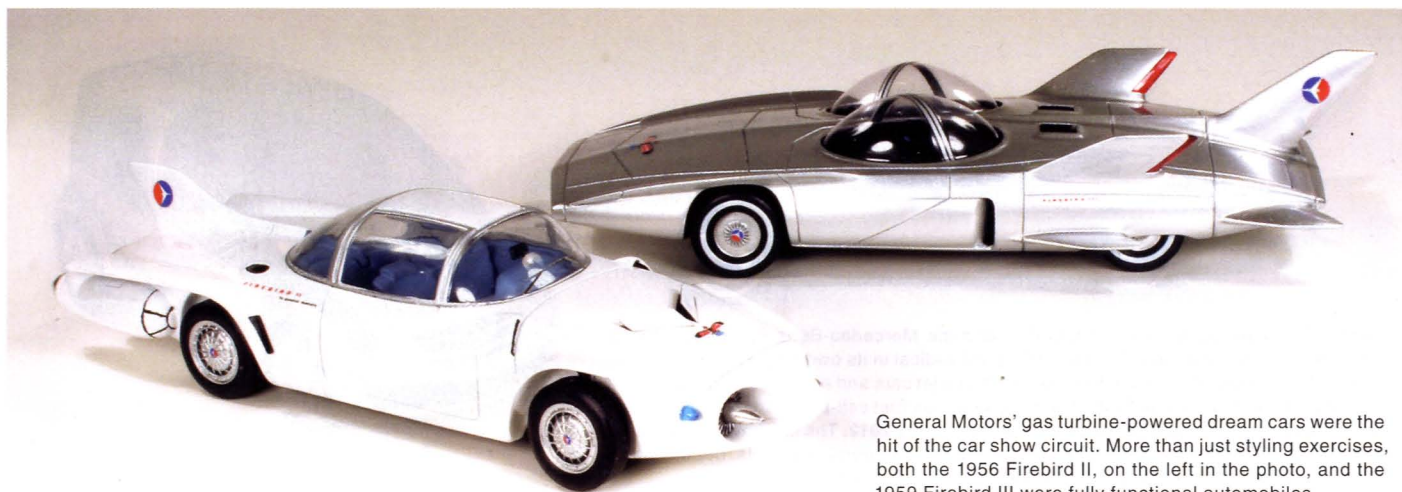
The dream cars of the 1950s and 1960s were more than just exercises in design that introduced a styling cue or two that might make their way into production: they were peeks into a bright tomorrow of automotive technology. Ford's Advanced Styling Center was especially fertile ground, sprouting wild ideas like the atomic-powered Ford Nucleon or the two-wheeled, gyroscopically balanced Gyron. Legendary futurist Syd Mead (you've seen his work in movies like *Tron*, *Alien*, and *Blade Runner*) worked at Ford for a few years after he graduated from the Art Center College of Design in 1959.

General Motors was no slouch in the dream car biz, which isn't surprising, considering the whole concept car idea started at GM when Harley Earl unveiled the Buick Y-Job in 1938. Earl had already produced show cars like the 1933 Cadillac Fleetwood Aerodynamic Coupe, but the Y-Job, which was actually designed by GM stylist George Snyder, was not intended to be a production car; it was supposed to be a glimpse of what could be. By the post-war years, GM's styling studio was cranking out fabulous cars



This Redline replica is a superb HO-scale copy of Paolo Martin's radical Ferrari 512 S Modulo, capturing the flying-saucer-like lines of the original in precise 1:87 scale. The inset photo shows the engine, with its signature red heads, clearly visible through the holes in the engine cover.





General Motors' gas turbine-powered dream cars were the hit of the car show circuit. More than just styling exercises, both the 1956 Firebird II, on the left in the photo, and the 1959 Firebird III were fully functional automobiles.

like clockwork and each year's Motorama show would feature a new treat.

A few years after my visit to Santa, I was shopping at a local toy store when I came upon solid diecast replicas of two of those wonderful show cars. They were made by a German company called **Schuco** and were called **Piccolos**. The cars that caught my eye were the No. 710 Firebird II, based on a 1956 GM concept car, and the No. 711 FX-Atmos, a Ford concept from 1954. They were 50 cents at a time when a Tootsie toy car was a nickel and four bits would get you a Saturday double-feature, a bag of popcorn, and leave you with enough change to pick up a comic book on the way home. I saved my allowance and bought the little Piccolos that immediately became some of my favorite toys.

The Piccolo cars and trucks were about 1:90 scale, the typical scale for German

HO models in those days. They weren't exactly finescale models, being a single piece of diecast metal with painted windows and brightwork, steel axles and rubber tires, but there was an endearing quality about them that persists to this day. Old Piccolos often command three-digit prices at auction and new models rival premium plastic HO models in price.

The Firebird and FX-Atmos were among the first models produced in the Piccolo range. They were introduced in 1957 and remained in production until 1965. Production of the Piccolo line ended in 1969 and many of the molds were destroyed in a fire in the 1970s. While the revitalized Schuco has been recreating many of the cars and trucks they made back then, the FX-Atmos and Firebird apparently have been relegated to history.

Though I'm out of luck when it comes to a model of the Ford FX-Atmos, there

is a 1:43-replica of my other Piccolo, the GM Firebird II and, thanks again to Burbank's House of Hobbies, I have it.

Long before the Pontiac clone of the Camaro made its debut, there were other Firebirds. In fact, there were three Firebirds, all gas-turbine-powered and all drivable.

The first Firebird, initially known as the XP-21, was a single-seat, fiberglass-bodied jet on wheels. It had a 370-horsepower Whirlfire gas turbine engine built at GM's Research Laboratories. Unveiled in 1953, the Firebird I was strictly a test bed and was entirely unsuited for everyday driving.

In contrast, the Firebird II was a two-door, four-passenger hardtop with jet-inspired styling including a big vertical fin in the rear and "jet engine" pods behind each rear wheel. The car was powered by a 200-horsepower Whirlfire GT-304 and was equipped with full-

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Nearly fifty years separate the Firebird III and the Mercedes-Benz F600 Hygenius, a research car first shown in 2005, but each is still radical in its own way. The Firebird was a late 1950s forecast of a new millennium filled with jet cars and automated highways. The Hygenius is a car of the real 21st Century: a hydrogen fuel cell-powered, zero-emissions vehicle featuring technology that could be on the road by 2012. The fins have disappeared and the bubble tops have evolved into more practical panoramic sunroofs, but the vision of a bright tomorrow is still being created in styling studios around the world.

power accessories and air-conditioning. It was the first car with disc brakes on all four wheels. Two Firebird IIs were built, one with a fiberglass body, the other with a titanium body. The Firebird II was the hit of the 1956 Motorama show. GM demonstrated the car's drivability when two GM engineers drove a Firebird II from Detroit to Atlanta and back.

The third member of the family was part of the Motorama show in 1959. Certainly the wildest of the designs, the Firebird III had more fins than any car built in Detroit. A total of seven sprouted from the sides and rear deck of the bubble-topped two-seater. The final Firebird also had a titanium body and sported novelties like cruise control, anti-lock braking, and a joystick mounted between the seats for steering. As was the case with the Firebird II, Norman James and Stefan Habsburg created the Firebird III's styling.

Today, fifty years since the last of the trio rolled into the limelight, all three cars are still displayed at shows and exhibitions.

While I don't have a model of the Firebird I, I have acquired 1:43 versions of the other two. These are diecasts made by **Bizarre Models** by **Fernando Pinto**, another company operating under the Minimax banner.

As was true of the HO Modulo, the two Bizarre models are beautifully crafted and highly detailed. All the fins are present or accounted for and the

other touches, like the small flaps on the hood of the Firebird II, are captured quite nicely.

Tooling is excellent and paint and print are first-rate and both cars scale out well. The biggest discrepancy I found was the Firebird III was almost four scale inches shorter than the specifications I found in my research. All other measurements on both cars were within a scale inch or less.

Incidentally, the Firebirds were big cars: the Firebird II measured 19-feet 7-inches from stem to stern, while the Firebird III was 20-feet 8-inches long, a half-foot longer than the Maybach 62, the longest regular-production car in the world today.

Unless you have the "layout of tomorrow," you probably don't need streets filled with dream cars. However, they can create an interesting opportunity for your railroad. Shows like the Motorama went on the road after their initial showing and concept cars were frequently shipped to regional events like cars shows and state fairs. In the real world, the transportation was usually handled by truck, but there's nothing that says they couldn't use rail shipping. For either of the Firebirds, an auto box would be perfect. Add another box or two for fixtures and equipment and you're good to go. A show car being unloaded at the local depot would make a pretty nifty scene. You could also have the car on the street, as those GM engineers did with the Firebird II, surrounded by a crowd of curious citizens craning their necks to catch a glimpse.

You might even have a figure representing a small boy waiting to have his sense of wonder kindled by an automotive vision of the world that could be.

See you next month at the grade crossing.

*If you have questions or comments for Bill Cawthon about model vehicles, e-mail them to: [Gradecrossing@modelrailroadnews.com](mailto:Gradecrossing@modelrailroadnews.com) or snail-mail them to Grade Crossing, Model Railroad News, P.O. Box 1080, Merlin, OR 97532-1080.*

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# S-Scale Couplers



S is "blessed" with a greater variety of coupler options than any of the other scales; enough to bewilder anyone who would consider venturing into S from, say, HO, where Kadees and Kadee-compatible couplers are the de-facto standard. This column is intended to provide some guidance for those new to the scale.

S couplers fall into the following general categories:

American Flyer-Compatible operating knuckle couplers: Examples: **Lionel/American Flyer** (stock parts on all equipment), **S Helper Service** (Part Nos. 01310, 00359, 00295, 00005 for ore cars, cabooses, diesel switchers, and other freight cars respectively), and **American Models** (Part Nos. CPL 601, 602, 603, for freight, passenger, and locos). All of these couplers are compatible with each other. All are operated (uncoupled) by between-the-rails mechanisms that lift either a weight or a spring-loaded lever that pops the knuckle open. Positive coupling occurs when at least one of the knuckles on two cars is open and the cars are pushed together, causing the weight or lever to drop and thus lock the knuckle. While scale-appearing, these couplers are grossly oversize — more

appropriate for F or G scale. Centering is not an issue; all of these couplers are intended to be truck-mounted. Some mounts have auxiliary centering springs that allow a degree of lateral offset during operation on undulating small-radius sectional track. All of these couplers have such a large vertical dimension that vertical misalignment problems are virtually nonexistent.

If you are not interested in operating unaltered American Flyer equipment along with your other S rolling stock, my recommendation is to avoid these couplers.

## "Scale" Couplers

In S standard gauge, "scale" is a term that generally excludes AF-compatible. Scale rolling stock and trackage conform to the **NMRA/NASG** wheel and track standards. There are no NMRA or NASG standards for couplers. Nonetheless, most scale operators prefer approximately scale-size couplers.

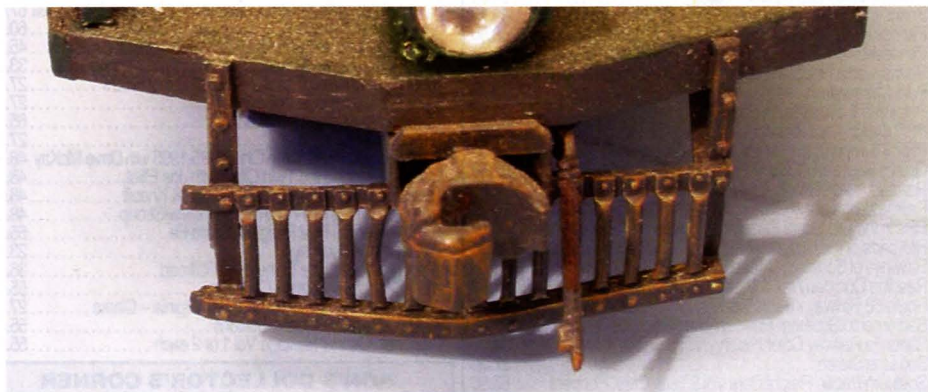
**Kadee-Compatible Operating Knuckle Couplers** include HO and S Kadees, S Helper service, and the various HO Kadee-compatible couplers (e.g., **Bachmann E-Z Mate**, **McHenry**). While

some claim that the HO couplers are too small and the S couplers are too large, the fact is that some dimensions of each are correct for S scale, and they are completely interoperable. The S Kadee (Part No. 802, black or Part No. 808, brown) is really a three-quarter size O-scale coupler (developed for On3, Part No. 803) with a slightly altered gladhand (uncoupling pin). The HO couplers' gladhands are too short for reliable magnetic uncoupling, but some modelers have acceptable results using the more powerful Kadee under-the-track permanent magnet (Part No. 308). All of these couplers come with matching sprung draft gear (coupler boxes) that provide both lateral centering and longitudinal buffering. The S Kadees and the SHS couplers have an additional feature that keeps the couplers axially aligned when pushed against each other, which greatly improves tracking reliability during backing maneuvers. Many styles of the HO No. 5 Kadees, favorites of some S people, will buckle or jackknife while backing, thus tending to derail when backing a long S-scale train.

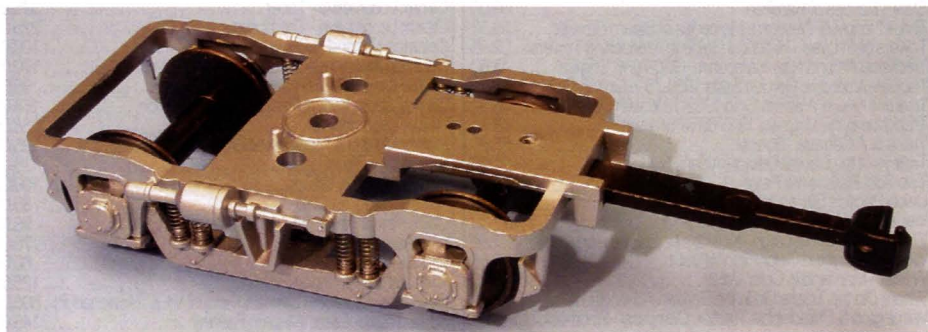
Many complain about the accordion action of the S Kadees: the longitudinal bobbing of the rear end of the train because of the centering-spring properties of the 802/808. This phenomenon causes the caboose to vary in speed from slow to fast to slow even as the locomotive proceeds at a uniform speed.

Some point out that stiffer centering springs will eliminate this phenomenon. This is true, but they will also prevent slack action, which I dearly love. I get a kick out of slowly starting a bunched-up train and hearing the click-click-click as each car's slack is successively taken up.

I use the knuckle spring (Part No. 847, a dozen per envelope) as a softer centering spring to eliminate accordioning. (And two extra knuckle springs are included with each envelope of Kadees.) Basically, the softer springs remain compressed as the train moves forward because the rolling friction of the cars more than offsets the springs' compression strength. My cabooses move at the same uniform speed as their locomotives. And



American Models' No. CPL 601 dummy coupler comes with its own draft gear box, both molded in brown Delrin.



American Models' No. CPL604 dummy coupler is shown talgo-mounted on an American Models No. 844S Budd streamliner truck.





Shown are Kadее permanent-magnet uncouplers. The one on the left, No. 321, is intended to be mounted atop the ties, between the rails. There is enough flangeway latitude to shift the ramp off center in order to provide reliable uncoupling on gentle curves. The magnet on the right, No. 308, considerably more powerful, goes beneath the ties. Ballast will conceal it, so the modeler must devise some visual clue as to its location. The author uses a couple of tie plates glued to the edge of the ballast.

I get nice slack action when starting a long train slowly.

The Kadееs and Kadее-compatibles all have one feature in common: Their design is non-prototypical, even though their overall appearance is generally scale-like. The knuckle is hinged at the center of the coupler head; the top of the gladhand is the hinge pivot. A transverse magnetic field pulls the pin to the side, causing the knuckle to pivot open. A small external coil spring causes the knuckle to close when the magnetic field is absent. The knuckle has a small lip on its tip that keeps mating couplers locked together when a train passes over a permanent magnet. Uncoupling can occur only when the locomotive stops and backs up a bit to eliminate drawbar tension, thus allowing the mating knuckle lips to disengage and thus separate laterally when spotted over a permanent magnet. Inexpensive between-the-rails (Part No. 321) or under-the-track permanent magnets (Part No. 308) can be placed anywhere on the layout with few inadvertent uncoupling problems. Kadее also makes an under-the-track electromagnetic uncoupler (Part No. 309) for use where permanent magnets could be problematic.

For reliable operation with permanent magnets, all of your rolling stock except for powered locos must have non-magnetic (non-ferrous) wheelsets. Even wheelsets with steel axles and nonmagnetic wheels can be problematic at low speeds (e.g., when switching). What happens with ferrous wheelsets is that they are attracted to the center of the uncoupling magnet. So when you run a train over a permanent magnet, the trucks on adjacent car ends will accelerate to the

center of the magnet, bunching up the slack just enough to achieve inadvertent uncoupling every time! One way to prevent this is to keep accelerating the train as it passes over the magnet. However, the better way is to replace all wheelsets with non-magnetic wheelsets. NorthWest Short Line manufactures drop-in NASG-standard and P:64 replacement wheelsets for all makes and axle end styles of S-scale 33-inch and 36-inch wheelsets.

Most of these couplers have visually intrusive features, but some do not. The McHenry couplers use a molded-in plastic spring tab for the knuckle, so there is no visible coil spring. The SHS and Kadее HO couplers have darkened gladhands. Appearance of the Kadее HO- and S-couplers can be improved greatly by blackening the copper-colored knuckle spring, and painting the gladhands of the Kadее S couplers brown or black really helps.

### Other Operating Knuckle Couplers

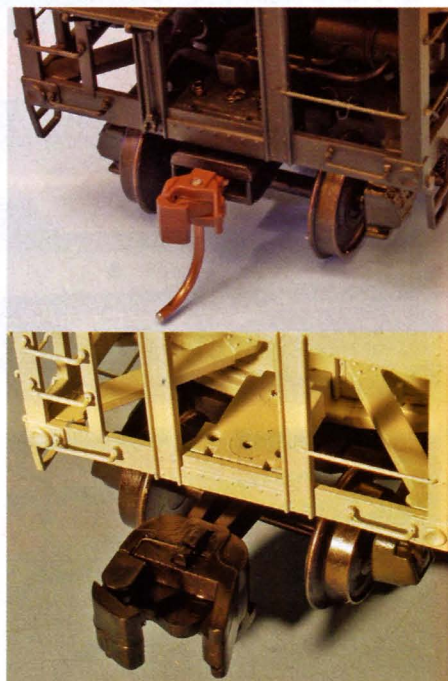
**Sergeant Engineering's** coupler (Part No. EC64) is a true scale coupler. As such, it will not mate with any other S coupler. For coupling and uncoupling, the Sergeant relies on a tiny steel ball internal to the coupler head. A wand with a magnet on its tip is waved over the coupler to lift the ball, thus allowing the knuckle to open as a locomotive separates two cars. Positive coupling is achieved when two cars are pushed together, allowing the ball to drop and thus lock the knuckle. The Sergeant coupler has no centering gear, so the modeler must align approaching couplers manually, just like the prototype. [Sergeant S couplers are no longer being manufactured; their manu-

facturer has made it clear that reintroduction is not likely.]

**Roundhouse/Devore** operating knuckle couplers were offered decades ago for both HO and S, and can still be found at swap meets. The HO- and S-couplers were identical except for the length of the uncoupling pin, which was actuated by a between-the-rails mechanically or magnetically raised ramp. These couplers operate exactly like the prototype, relying only on the weight of the pin itself to lock the knuckle in place. They are mentioned here because they are still favored for contest entries. Expert builders clip the pin off just below the coupler head, drill a small hole through the rounded top of the pin, and actuate the coupler via a scale coupler lift bar. Devore couplers do not perform well with other makes. Devore made sprung draft gear boxes for their couplers, but automatic centering was not provided.

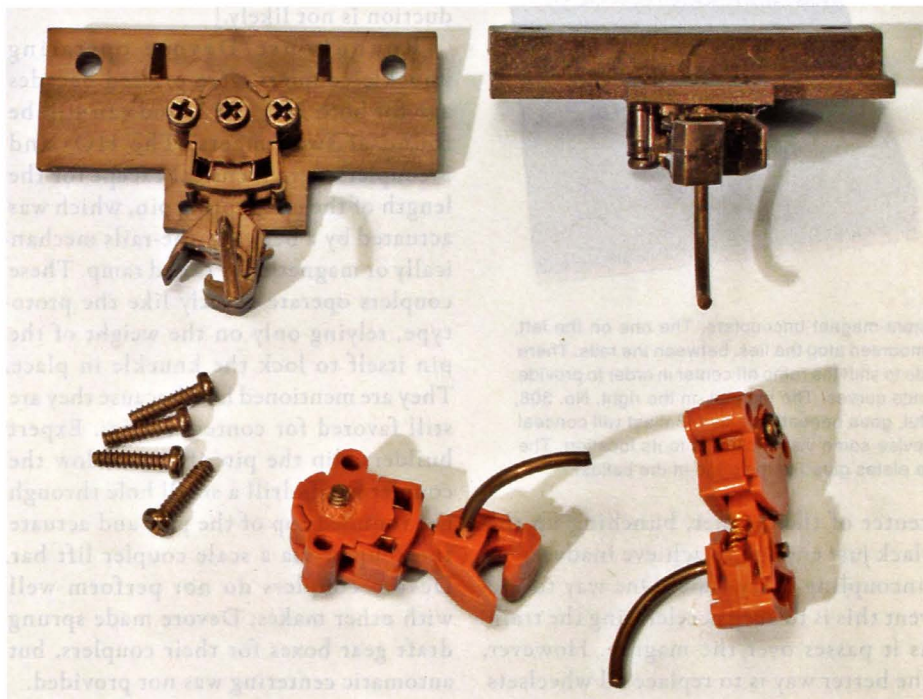
### Dummy Scale Couplers

Some of these are intended to be mounted talgo-style, rigidly attached to an extension of the truck bolster. Others, generally without any centering mechanism, are to be mounted to the carbody. For both kinds, coupling and uncoupling can be achieved only by lifting one cou-



Shown here are two couplers mounted on similar S Helper Service hopper cars. The upper image shows an S-scale Kadее No. 808 brown coupler in a black draft gear box from a Kadее No. 802. The lower image shows a stock S Helper Service American Flyer-compatible coupler, more than twice the size of the nearly-scale-size Kadее.





Shown here are two of the S Helper Service Kadее-style after-market couplers. The black ones, No. 00588, come attached to a mounting bar designed to fit the firm's EMD F-3 and F-7 diesel locomotives. The brown couplers, No. 01295, will fit any S Helper Service car and any other car designed to accept Kadее No. 802 and 808 couplers. The screws shown are included with the brown couplers.

pler over the other. Examples: American Models "snap-lock" couplers (Part No. CPL600), American Models long-shank

passenger-car couplers (Part No. CPL604), and Ye Olde Huff 'n Puff dummy couplers (Part No. 2523). The

passenger-car couplers are intended to be rigidly mounted on truck bolster extensions. The AM "lightweight passenger" style of truck (Part Nos. 840HR and 840S with AF-compatible and scale wheelsets respectively) comes with dummy scale couplers integral with their bolsters. Because of these couplers' extreme distance from their pivot points, they cause derailments at the start of small-radius curves. If you use at least a 36-inch radius, or spiral easements in conjunction with smaller radii, such derailments will not be a problem.

### So How to Choose?

First you need to decide what your objectives are. To do this, you need to recognize whether you are a railroad model builder ("builder") or a model railroad operator. What's the difference? The builder generally has no layout, and no near-term prospects for one. He is primarily interested in railroad rolling stock as individual scale models. For the builder, the primary objective is realism. Prototype appearance and scale size are essential; operational reliability is a distant second. Your choices are really lim-



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ited. You can choose either dummy couplers (as from Ye Olde Huff 'n Puff or American Models) or Sergeant couplers, if you can still find them. Use of the dummies on an actual layout requires the old 0-5-0 (hands-on). Sergeants require a magnetic wand and reachable trackwork.

The operator likely has, or has access to, a layout of some sort; she is primarily interested in trouble-free operation of every piece of rolling stock. The operator must have operational reliability. Approximate scale size is necessary, but true prototype fidelity of the coupler design is secondary to operational considerations. Cars must stay coupled unless uncoupling is desired; then they must uncouple when, and only when, desired.

### Practical Considerations for the Operator

It's a Kadee world out there, including the Kadee clones. Your choices are the S Helper Service scale coupler (Part 00588 for F-7 and F-9 diesels, Part 01295 for everything else), the Kadee "S" coupler (the 802 or 808, or even the On3 803) or any of the standard-size HO Kadees or Kadee clones. The S Helper Service Kadee-compatibles come completely assembled, ready to attach to your car or locomotive. All the rest must be assembled by the modeler. The Kadee On3 and S couplers are identical except for the color and shape of the trip pin. The Kadee 802/803/808 coupler is a 3/4-size coupler with respect to the Kadee O-scale standard gauge coupler. As such, it is also properly sized for S, at least to the extent an automatic coupler with the Kadee knuckle design can be considered accurate.

The "S" and "HO" Kadees are interoperable; i.e., the "S" couplers will operate reliably with the "HO" couplers. The HO couplers require longer trip pins if you want to use standard Kadee between-the-rails magnets for uncoupling. Some operators find that the Kadee under-the-track magnet (Part No. 308) is strong enough to uncouple the shorter HO Kadee gladhands. One of my colleagues doubles the magnetic flux by stacking two of these magnets beneath the track, achieving faultless operation of unaltered HO Kadees.

For the operator who is concerned about picking a coupler that's closest to

scale size, consider this: The Kadee S coupler's height is scale; the width is too large. So if your layout is high, the S coupler will appear correct, viewing from the side. The HO coupler's width is nearly correct, but the height is too small. So if your layout is low, the HO coupler will appear correct when viewed from above.

But there are two reasons for the operator to use the S coupler:

A. Many manufacturers design their railroad cars to accept the S coupler. Examples are **Pacific Rail/S Scale America** and **S Helper Service**. Why not keep your life simple and go with what's intended?

B. For cars 50-feet long or longer, the S coupler is mandatory. The reason is the vertical offset of mating couplers when your train crests a hill. If you use HO couplers, the cresting car's coupler will lift out of the mating coupler on the car that's still on the uphill climb. The longer the cars and/or the steeper the grade (the more abrupt the vertical transition), the more likely the uncouplings. The S coupler has a lot more vertical "grab" than the HO coupler, and is therefore much more likely to remain coupled than the HO versions.

### Closing Remarks

All these couplers except the AF-compatibles require mounting at the proper height, which is 17/32 inch from the railhead to the vertical center of the coupler knuckle. Couplers with an actuating pin/gladhand also require that the bottom of the pin clear the railhead by 1/16 inch. Both the NASG and Kadee (Part No. 814) market gauges that let you check these measurements easily. Generally, adjusting coupler height requires adding or removing truck-mounting washers and/or shims between the coupler box and the carbody. Adjusting pin clearance can be done with a pair of pliers. Kadee markets specialty pliers (Part No. 237) for just this purpose.

*Feel free to e-mail any comments or questions about S scale in general to [scurves@modelrailroadnews.com](mailto:scurves@modelrailroadnews.com) or snail-mail them to S-Curves, Model Railroad News, P.O. Box 1080, Merlin, OR 97532-1080. Suggestions, contributions, and announcements are all welcome.*

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# Wrapping it up with Decoder Pro

BY JOHN SIPPLE — Well, folks, we found a new tool (new to me, anyway) for managing the decoders in our locomotives. Not only can you keep track of your roster and all the changes you have made to the default setting, you can also use it to write the changes through the appropriate DCC command station. Instead of slaving over a hot throttle with a tiny screen, punching little, bitty buttons, you suddenly have all the real estate of your computer screen, big keyboard keys, and your mouse to work this out.

Remember the old admonishment to new computer users: "Garbage In, Garbage Out," abbreviated GIGO. This means accurate data entry is highly important, and unless you hire it out, you're going to be the data entry clerk. Given the state of decoders today and the incredible diversity of brands and models, reading an entire decoder as a routine practice is s-l-o-o-o-w. There is no guarantee that you will get the right definition or even any definition because the system may not successfully read the decoder. This isn't JMRI's fault; that's just the way it is, for now. So how do Command Stations read CVs from a decoder?

Let's cut away to a scene where Roy Rogers downloads Trigger, his famous horse, from an old-time train. He pauses by the stock car and asks, "Trigger, old pal, how many cars are on this train?"

Trigger says nothing but tosses his

head and Roy says. "Well, you tell me when I get to the right number. Ready? Zero."

The beautiful palamino doesn't move. Roy continues his count upward and the horse doesn't move until Roy gets to 27, at which point Trigger tosses his head and paws the dirt beside the tracks. Roy finishes the business by saying, "So, there are 27 cars on the train."

And folks, that's how Command Stations read CVs on a program track. The exact technical details aren't germane to this discussion, but the method is important here. When you have two decoders with a different purpose for each in the same loco, most of the Control Variables will be different one from the other. There are only a few CVs that will be the same. If the Command Station attempts to read the same CVs on two different decoders in the same locomotive and they don't have the same value, both horses will stand quietly until Roy gets to the one with the lowest value at which point that horse will whinny and paw the ground. That number is reported and the reading ends.

Writing a value to a Control Variable on a decoder is very much faster because there is no counting involved. In fact, you can write the entire 28 CV speed table in the time it takes to read a CV value of 255. That's why it is so important to have as good a decoder defini-



tion as possible, and the folks at JMRI are constantly adding new ones. At some point, it might be to everyone's value if decoder makers created and submitted their own decoder definition files, though that doesn't seem to be happening yet.

You can build your own decoder definition by starting with either a generic or an NMRA basic definition, altering it to suit your needs. This means you will proceed with a rather untried set of CVs in the definition, regardless of what is actually in the decoder. You must go pane by pane, first reading the settings in the decoder (CVs). Then you must study what's there and compare that to whatever information comes with the loco and plan your changes carefully. Finally, you write them and then save the changes to the file in your computer. Obviously, a ready-built definition is much more convenient.

As you work with **Decoder Pro**, you may run across locomotives with two decoders in them as I described above. Take for example the **Broadway Limited** Blueline locomotives. For full service under DCC, you have to add a motor decoder to go with the built-in sound decoder. You can do this as a gradual work-up, first setting the address on the sound decoder and then installing the motor decoder at default address 03. Now you



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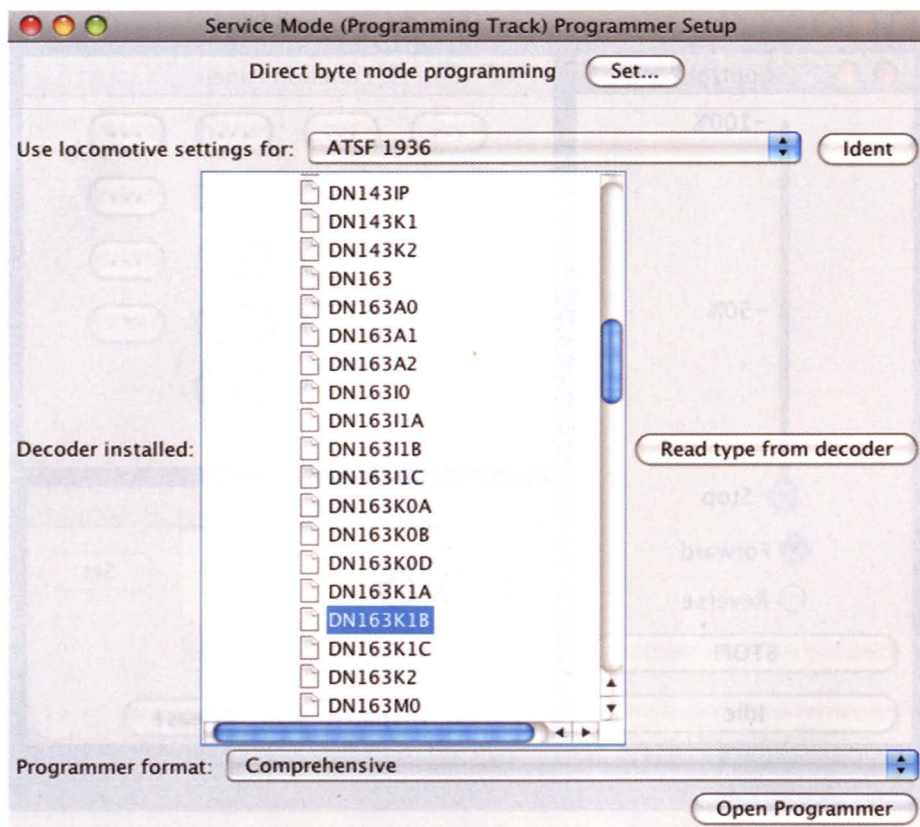
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The Service Mode programming window is where you select the decoder definition from the list of those available. If you click the [Read type from decoder] Decoder Pro will try to do just that, and if it comes up with a definition, it shows any and all that fit it. In this case, N-scale Athearn F45 ATSF 1936 has the DN163K1B from Digitrax selected. Click on the [Open Programmer] button to go to work.

can program each one individually, but you'll have to create TWO entries for one locomotive. When you merge both decoders into the same address, you could still keep those two definitions, allowing you to address each decoder in that way.

Given how many of these locos have been bought, that makes a case for being able to set up two decoders in one loco. This would have a Blueline and a motor decoder, both with very few CVs in common. As it is, the Blueline definition in Decoder Pro is blank for motor and speed control, so I can't just go in and freelance in this area. The same is true for a motor decoder. If I write to motor control CVs 2, 6, and 5, the sound decoder can't hear these commands and only the motor decoder is affected. If I write to the sound decoder at CV230, the motor decoder doesn't hear it. For those few instances that both hear a particular command, both of them should.

Still, there is no reason to use Decoder Pro on a Blueline locomotive without being able to reach in and change the motor stuff. Either I'd like to see those definitions be "open" for change, or allow a motor decoder to be



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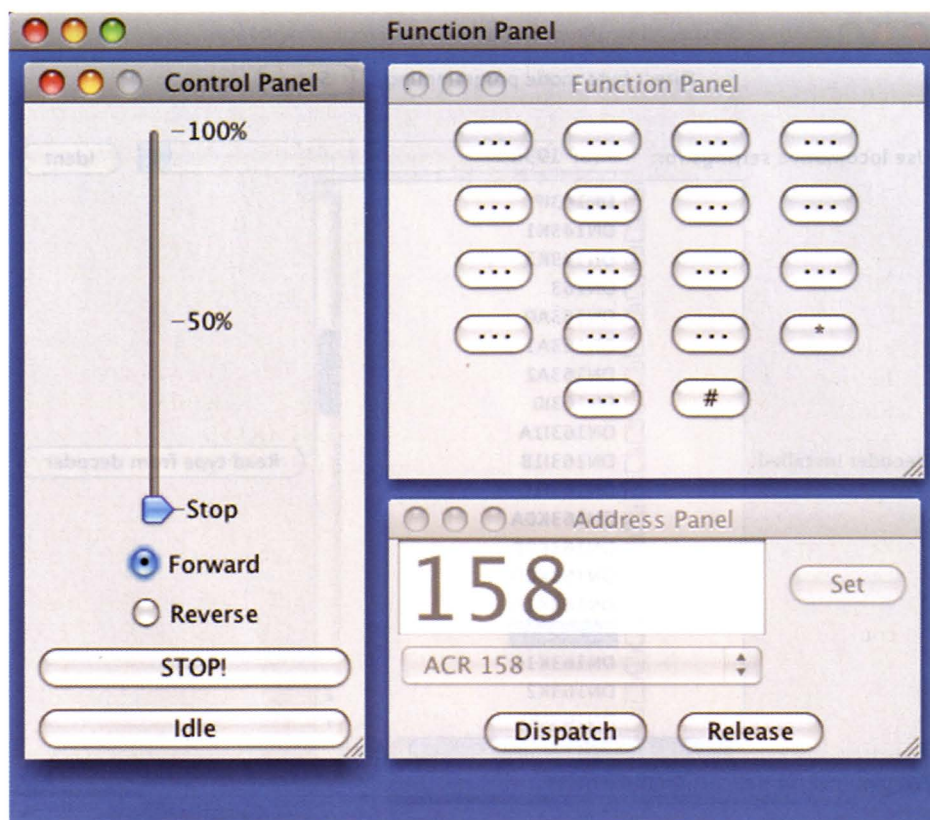
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“piggybacked” in the definition. However, having two entries for one locomotive may be the best work-around for a while. Even after you’ve merged the decoders under a single address, this still provides a method for handling the two different sets of Control Variables. Don’t be surprised if you make the most changes to the motor decoder and the fewest to the sound. Thus, if you’re going to settle for just one decoder definition, it should probably be the motor decoder. If you decide to make rare changes to the sound decoder CVs, you can do that from the throttle or a second definition.

### Forever young

So Decoder Pro is always changing for the better. At the center of JMRI is **Bob Jacobsen**, a gentle man and college physics professor who acts as the hub of the wheel. When I talked to him on the phone, I mentioned a couple of problems I noticed in the Macintosh interface. There’s no point in discussing what those problems are because they no longer exist. In the next upgrade, they were gone. Something on the order of once a month, more or less, a new upgrade appears. These are generally developer



I love the throttle in JMRI, but this is the Mac version before the change. Even though it couldn't display the text on the function buttons and other things were problematic, I could still use the throttle just fine. In fact, it offers functions 0 to 28, something that Digitrax throttles are not capable of doing quite yet. You can use the arrow keys on the keyboard to run the throttle. Up and Down controls the direction, and Left and Right kick you up or down a step, respectively.





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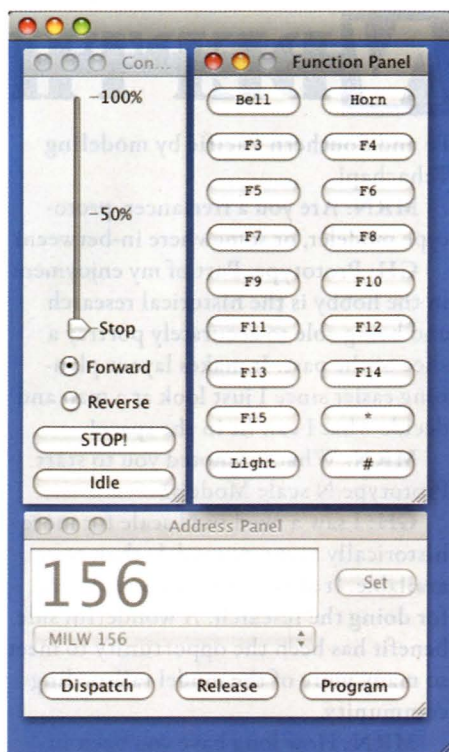
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This is the throttle as I rearranged it for the screen I have. A word to Bob Jacobsen got it fixed, and the Asterisk [\*] button shifts from the lower functions to those with numbers higher than F15. In this screen shot, it's set up to run Athearn's HO SD40-2 Milwaukee 156. You can set up consists with Decoder Pro and then run them from this throttle, too.

releases, but I haven't had any problems with them. Periodically, they consolidate all of their gains into a production version. Currently, that is Version 2.4.

Rumors and notions crop up here and there suggesting JMRI will somehow become a commercial product, but that just can't happen. No one "owns" JMRI, so it cannot be bought or sold. It is a public, open-source project, but it is also copyrighted, so you can't just take it and then release it under your own name, cashing in on all this hard work. Those of us who use JMRI are very fortunate to have such a resource — for free!

Everyone thinks up something they want to change, and if they communicate that change to the JMRI leadership at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/jmriusers/>, they just might find that change being made! There are many DCC systems that are supported by JMRI, and JMRI offers more than Decoder Pro for you to use. LocoTools is a LocoNet utility application that allows you to do any number of things with your Digitrax system, including program a DS64 without crawling under your layout. Now that's cool! Panel Pro lets you build control panels for use in operating your layout, trains,

switches, and signals. But all of that is beyond the scope of this column for now.

I have found that Decoder Pro is quickly becoming nigh-unto indispensable to me. I have a huge number of locos in three scales to run through the process, and it's going to make quite a list. Every time I put a different brand or type of locomotive or decoder on the program track and go to work, I find something new or interesting. You gotta love a deal like this.

I've just barely scratched the surface of this topic, but you can be confident this is not the last time it will be mentioned in "Thinking of DCC." While it is possible to use JMRI without being on line, you'll have to find a source for the files and updates. I find myself visiting their web site at regular intervals, just to see what's new. We'll revisit updates when they are important news. Stay with us!

*If you have questions, answers, suggestions, tips, or comments about DCC and the topic in this column, email me at: dcc@modelrailroadnews.com or send a letter to: DCC, c/o Model Railroad News, PO Box 1080, Merlin, OR 97532-1080*

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# N DEPTH

Fe and Southern Pacific by modeling Tehachapi.

me a Lionel set when I was three years old. I switched to HO at age ten and finally to N scale at age 22. There was a ten-year spell, 1968-1977, that I was somewhat inactive as I was spending my time racing cars. I raced in the Sports Car Club of America and did some super-modified dirt track racing.

**GH:** Probably N. I was attracted to N when I was in college and had very little room for a layout. I have more room now but I can do so much more in N scale than HO. The other scales do not have the range of models that I would like.

**GH:** I model Southern Pacific and Santa Fe since I fell in love with Tehachapi. I was [modeling] Santa Fe first, but in 1977 I rode behind 4449 between Houston and San Antonio and then Richard Steinheimer had a great spread in *Trains* magazine about Tehachapi. I saw that I could do Santa

**GH:** Prototype. Part of my enjoyment in the hobby is the historical research and being able to accurately portray a slice of the past. It makes layout planning easier since I just look at a map and decide what I can fit in the space!

**GH:** I saw a need in N scale for more historically accurate models than were available. It also tied in with my liking for doing the research. A wonderful side benefit has been the opportunity to meet so many more of the model railroading community.

**GH:** As a “hobby” since 2001, I converted [Prototype N Scale Models] to a true business in 2007. Before 2007 I was not producing enough runs for the endeavor to come anywhere near

**MRN:** How did you get started in model railroading?

**GH:** My Aunt gave my brother and



You can find George's booth at various conventions and shows, including those presented by the Southern Pacific Historical & Technical Society, Santa Fe Railway Historical & Modeling Society, and The N Scale Collector. Be sure to contact George to find out his current show schedule. And when you meet him in person, ask about those checkered flags on his banner!



covering expenses. I hope to turn that corner soon.

**MRN:** How was it getting started?

**GH:** Not bad really. I had a lot of experience in retail selling auto parts and a lot of reference material to research the models. I started working with Micro-Trains as I was aware of their special run program and my first car fit their 40-foot boxcar model. Intermountain was added to my supplier list soon after and I am working with Atlas to bring out another run.

**MRN:** Is it "just a business" or is it a "labor of love?"

**GH:** Actually a little bit of both. My wife would like more business though! I doubt anyone could keep doing what I've been doing without a large portion of the labor of love being involved. So far the business side has been keeping up with paying for new releases and if I can do that I can continue.

**MRN:** What is your favorite product (or product line) that Prototype N scale Models offers?

**GH:** I really only have one line, prototypical N-scale freight cars. My personal favorite of my releases has been the Pacific Fruit Express R-40-10 steel reefer

two-pack by Micro-Trains. The Micro-Trains car is an exact reproduction of the prototype and they did a wonderful job of duplicating the 1946-1952 paint scheme that I wanted.

**MRN:** What is the most popular product (or product line) with your customers?

**GH:** The first run of Pacific Fruit Express wood reefers with the Western Pacific logo sold out the quickest and made me do a second run a year later. The second run is just about sold out now.

**MRN:** Can you give us a hint about what's on the horizon for Prototype N scale Models in the coming months?

**GH:** I continue to seek out cars that I can do correctly that the manufacturers have overlooked or haven't gotten around to doing. I have mostly done western U.S. models of Transition Era cars but am always on the lookout for other projects without restriction to that theme. Before 2008 is out I should have a run of Southern Pacific B-50-27 boxcars by Intermountain in both Southern Pacific and T&NO lettering. Early 2009 should see a re-run of Union Pacific B-50-40 boxcars by

Micro-Trains. My Atlas project is a run of Missouri Pacific 1932 ARA boxcars with the "Route of the Eagles" slogan in three reporting marks, MP, I-GN, and NOT&M.

**MRN:** Do you have any words of wisdom or advice for our readers?

**GH:** Yes, do you know how to make a small fortune in the model railroad business? Start out with a large one! Seriously, this is not a business for someone to live on. I hope that when I retire from my day job the business will cover my expenses when I go to the train shows and conventions that I enjoy attending.

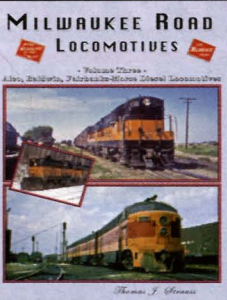
**MRN:** Thanks very much for taking the time to speak with *Model Railroad News* today!

**GH:** My pleasure!

### Where to Find George's Models

Although Prototype N scale Models doesn't have a dedicated web site, you can find George's models on the "special run" pages of companies such as Micro-Trains, Intermountain Railway, and coming soon, Atlas Model Railroad Company. The majority of the models offered are Southern

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In 1946 Pacific Fruit Express adopted a new paint scheme for their reefer fleet in which both the Southern Pacific and Union Pacific heralds were displayed on both sides of the car. Prior to this, each side had only one

herald. Thanks to George Hollwedel, and a little help from companies like Micro-Trains, Intermountain, and Atlas, you can purchase these great looking cars, as well as many others, from Prototype N Scale Models.

Pacific and Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway, although you can also find other roads from time to time (such as Rock Island). Contact George (at the e-mail below) to be added to the mailing list of new releases. You'll be glad you did!

Next time I'll share my interview with a true electronic genius who's been helping modelers light up their miniature worlds for many years. See you then!

*Feel free to E-mail any comments or questions about N scale in general to: [ndepth@modelrailroadnews.com](mailto:ndepth@modelrailroadnews.com). Or write to: N-Depth, c/o Model Railroad News, P.O. Box 1080, Merlin, OR 97532-1080. Suggestions, contributions, and announcements are all welcome.*

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# Holy Cats! Steven Went to DCC!

In my experience, familiarity breeds not contempt, but craziness. If you work, live, study, or do anything with a certain group of people, comically unexpected events are bound to occur, and life will often be more interesting, more spontaneous, and more fun afterwards. Ha. You were expecting another reference to college, huh? Bzzzt, wrong guess!

What I was going to say is that it didn't take long for that to happen to me at *MRN*. Our amazing editor here managed to convince me to make a major change in how I enjoy model railroading by switching from the Direct Current variable voltage power packs to all-out computerized Digital Command Control (DCC.)

Somehow or other, the DCC evangelist from the column next door managed to get someone with all of the qualifications to stay with a standard DC power pack control style to make the leap of faith to DCC. Back at my parents' house, I have a nearly-finished model railroad with an expansive set of DC-current controllers and switchable electrical blocks. My locomotive fleet is largely from the bargain bin with little consideration for DCC. I've also had to cut down on hobby spending these days, and if I wasn't so stingy on my motive power budget already, I'd switch from running the B&O to collecting pieces from the other C&O — the Cheapskate & Ohio! Finally, I'm an Information Technology major. After dealing with computers in class, I don't really feel like doing more of the same for my hobby!

But I'm a part of this wonderful model railroad journalism business, and part of that is you have to keep current to be able to test the newest products. Before, I worked at a hobby shop and had five DCC systems on which to test items, but my move to college put the shop rather far out of reach. I still had a model railroad on hand and enough Unitrak to make it hard to walk in my dorm during testing. But all the track in the world won't blow the horn on an N-scale sound locomotive, and unless you go and install more passing sidings, that same spare track won't make tight urban switching any easier.

## The Revolution Begins

Enter DCC writer extraordinaire John Sipple. John brought up DCC during a phone conversation and asked me to try and determine which system would work best for me. My conditions were that the system had to be able to test any item that the market can possibly throw at me, it had to be easy to expand to an extra throttle, and it had to be simple to use. The latter two conditions arose from knowing that perhaps I'll get a friend to join me on a run session sometime, and I don't like running on complex and technical-oriented DCC systems. If I wanted a hobby like that, I'd live in a computer lab, and I spend plenty of time there for class already!

This narrowed the field to **Bachmann's Dynamis** and **MRC's Prodigy Advance2**. The Bachmann system's digital display and almost video-game-smooth appearance were good selling points, up against MRC's no-frills simple interface and the all-important "all you need to know is printed on the back of the remote." After re-reading *MRN's* reviews of both systems, my decision came down to each system's expandability. They were both of similar simplicity, but I liked how easy it is to just plug in and rename an MRC throttle, or even plug in a wireless one. The fact that MRC could adapt to match Bachmann's wireless capability and even add a computer interface sold me on it, and after some discussions between me, John, and MRC's excellent technical support man **Frank Verrico**, a Prodigy Advance2 appeared in my campus post office.

The easiest thing I've ever done with DCC was hooking it up to my layout. I merely disconnected the wires from my DC power pack and connected them to the MRC base unit's Program Track terminals. I then pulled out my DCC-equipped travel loco, a Chessie B30-7, and made sure everything was installed right. No problem, the loco responded to basic programming. After switching the wire leads over to the mainline terminals, and I was up and running, my long-dormant digitized Chessie locomotive was purring like a 150 ton kitten. It took me



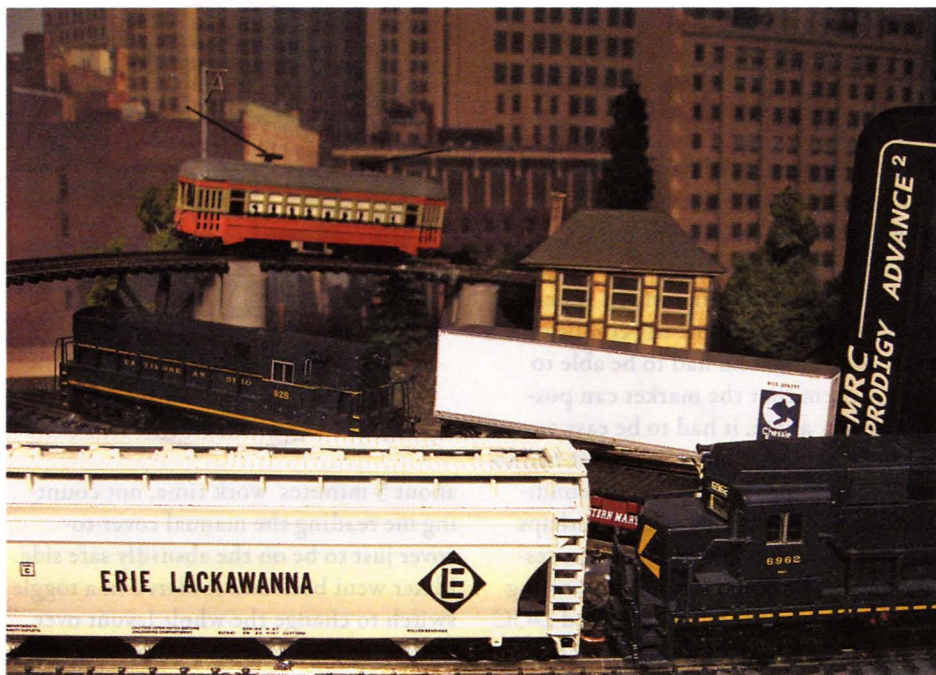
about 5 minutes' work time, not counting me reading the manual cover-to-cover just to be on the absurdly safe side. I later went back and soldered in a toggle switch to change the whole layout over between program track and mainline for added convenience.

## Running On Digital

Once I got beyond the basics, my progress into DCC slowed a bit as I took advantage of DCC's huge potential. My locomotive fleet seemed determined to resist my every effort to install decoders in each locomotive. By the luck of my recent interest in the Baltimore & Ohio, I have a good deal of relatively recent locomotives of the same railroad that will accept decoders, but there are several catches. First, several require wired-in decoders, like the Life-Like E7 and Bachmann H-16-44 (which were both quite easy to convert.) And while **E-R Models'** RF-16 Sharknose diesel is DCC-friendly, accepting a **Digitrax** decoder in place of the light board, the decoder is out of production, very expensive, (my hobby shop charges \$45.99 for them,) and I would need four of them for my Sharknose fleet. I said NO WAY to that price tag and went ahead planning a hand-wired job using a tiny **NCE** decoder and **Miniatronics** connection pins, connecting a cab unit and booster unit into a 1-decoder pair. The connector pins let me disconnect the B-unit and run the A solo if I choose, and it cost less than half of what the two Digitrax decoders would run me for the pair.

Once I had a small fleet of locomotives assembled, I could start running trains. The joy of being able to control multiple locomotives was an instant hit with me. I could stop my freight switching trains on a siding and sling a





This is the best picture I could take of DCC's advantages over regular Direct Current electric control. My GP30 helps the regular switcher in this urban switching district, a low-g geared H-16-44, while spotting a car on an inconveniently placed siding. Controlling multiple locomotives is a huge selling point for computerized train controls, allowing for such things as the trolley sneaking by in the background. Say, this layout doesn't look familiar... more on that some other month, perhaps?

passenger train by on the mainline, or bring in a second switcher to help out. I worked on lashing several locomotives together before leaving school for break, but I had problems getting the not-so-smooth older locomotives to play nicely together. This led me to conclude that switching to DCC is not merely changing control systems; it involves changing the way you run your railroad.

### Adapting to New Potential

As much as I prefer TCS, MRC, and NCE's products, I have to say that Digitrax's motto sums up DCC perfectly. (Did I use enough 3 letter acronyms in that sentence?) Every Digitrax decoder manual says "Run your trains, not your

track!" on it, and I wholeheartedly agree. The ability to run trains practically free of electrical limitations opens up model railroading to whole new ideas.

The first big change I made on my railroad was how I organized locomotives. Earlier, they were only differentiated by how smoothly they ran on straight DC power. Now, much like an actual freight shipper, I classify, re-gear, and group my locomotives for better performance. I programmed my F-M H-16-44 with a lower top speed to serve as a yard switcher while leaving my passenger E7 with a high speed. You've heard stuff like this before in reviews, where everyone discusses how fast the real locomotive ran and how to reflect that in speed table programming; however, in my

case, the programming reflects how my railroad assigns its locomotives.

For a better example, I no longer just buy locomotives. I go shopping for either a switcher, a road unit, a passenger engine, or some similar task that I need filled. Recently, I decided to purchase an Atlas SD35 strictly to work with my GP30, assigning them to road freight service. As I complete the RF-16 conversions, the four of them will work together (as per their shared decoders), on coal service and other heavy trains. And once I get a Bachmann 44 ton centercab, the H-16-44 will be geared back up for road switching, yielding its low-gear yard duty to the little centercab. (That's what happens when you get another reference book and find B&O's H-16s pictured handling road freights solo.) This science of assigning, "overhauling," and purposeful purchasing seems to work beautifully under DCC, where every locomotive can run a little differently yet still be able to lash together to get the chores done. And to me, it feels much more like running a railroad rather than playing with toys.

My railroad now runs much differently due to the greater potential of DCC. For one, there is more traffic on the line. Parked next to the storage yard is either a freight train or a passenger train, which will roll slowly around the loop of track spanning my desks and keep the local switching crews on their toes. Secondly, locomotives no longer have to vanish by the N-scale Hand of God when I want to change engines. The H-16, E7, B30-7, and GP30 were constant residents of my digital-equipped railroad, and I would just fire up the ones I wanted and leave the others sitting. Before, I removed all inactive locomotives from the railroad. There is a notable difference and interesting variety between running road freights

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(run in long circles and occasionally change out cars in the yard), local delivery switch jobs, and constant-running passenger trains. The similarity of turning a DC throttle knob and watching trains move has given way to firing up a locomotive assigned to my particular job and getting to work, not to mention the roster management and train dispatching that have brought my humble railroad to life more than ever before.

In conclusion, DCC has elevated model railroading to a new level for me. It was and is a transition that requires effort and thought, and that added input has yielded a more pleasing hobby experience. As my interest in railroading has matured to appreciate the work that remains behind the scenes from most railfans' perspective, now my hobby has caught up and put me in charge as motive power superintendent, shop crew chief, dispatcher, schedule manager, and of course, engineer. So John was right in wanting me to switch to digital control. And even if you offered me back four times the hours I have spent (and will spend) on decoder installations, I'd still say "No thanks, I'll stick with my better control system."

*If you have any questions, comments, tips, or suggestions concerning this column or model railroading in general, send them to: The Future of Model Railroading, c/o Model Railroad News, P.O. Box 1080, Merlin, OR 97532-1080 or e-mail to: tamr@modelrailroadnews.com.*

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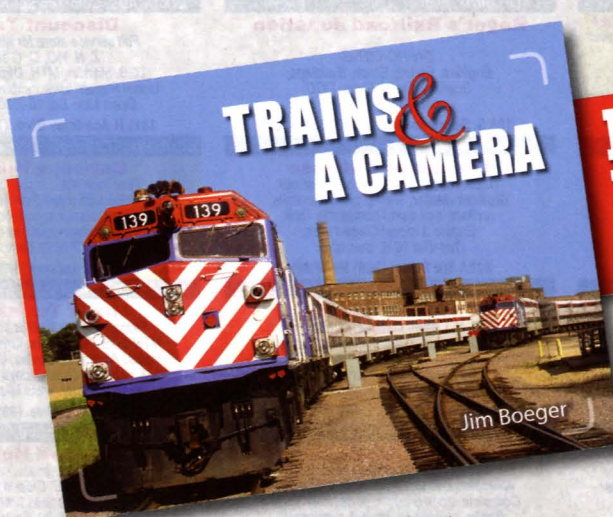
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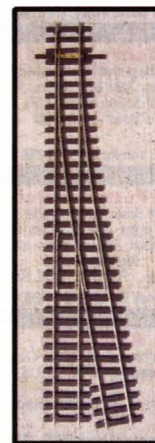
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## EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

### Events for the May 2009 issue should be received by March 13th, 2009

Attn. Clubs & Show Sponsors — Place your FREE event announcement in front of thousands of readers! Let them know about your special event! Send your announcement to us at least three months prior to the event for maximum coverage. Write to: Events, c/o Model Railroad News, P.O. Box 1080, Merlin, OR 97532-1080. You can fax us your event at: (541) 955-0346; or e-mail: [events@modelrailroadnews.com](mailto:events@modelrailroadnews.com)

Free trial subscription cards of Model Railroad News are available upon request for show and meet attendees. Call, fax, or e-mail for details.

Events & Activities can be viewed online at [www.ModelRailroadNews.com](http://www.ModelRailroadNews.com)

**Alabama, Fairhope** — Fairhope's Seventeenth Annual Model Train Show will be held on March 21st & 22nd, at Fairhope Kindergarten Center, 100 S. Church Street. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. This train show is held in conjunction with the annual Fairhope Arts & Crafts Show. Attractions to include a contest for the oldest accompanied child. The winner was 61 in 2008. Admission: \$2.00, adults; accompanied children admitted free (no age restriction); active duty military, police, and fire fighters admitted free. For more information, contact: Herb Kern, 6405 Magnolia Place Ct. S., Mobile, AL 36695; (251) 660-1659; e-mail: [dxndkern@aol.com](mailto:dxndkern@aol.com)

**Arizona, Phoenix** — The Arizona Division/PSR/NMRA Spring Division Meet will be held on March 7th, at the First Southern Baptist Church, 3100 W Camelback. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Admission: \$7.00, members; \$3.00, under 21; free if joining NMRA/PSR at registration. For more information, contact: Art Carlton, 1898 S. Private Drive, Casa Grande, AZ, 85294; (520) 723-9212.

**California, Bakersfield** — The Golden Empire Historical & Modeling Society will be holding a Model Train show on March 14th & 15th, at Kern County Fairgrounds, 1142 South P Street. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attractions to include over 100 vendor tables, thousands of square feet of model train layouts, and Live Steam Train Rides. Admission: \$6.00, adults; ages 12 & under admitted free when accompanied by paying adult; admission good for both days. For more information, contact: Doug Wagner, 14008 Tierra Blanca Ave., Bakersfield, CA 93314; (661) 331-6695; e-mail: [carldw@aol.com](mailto:carldw@aol.com)

**California, Buena Park** — Sunshine Models' Prototype Modelers Meet will be held on March 8th, at the Buena Park Holiday Inn 7000 Beach Boulevard at Riverside Freeway (CA 91). Hours will be from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Meet to feature five nationally noted speakers on historical and modeling subjects, as well as prototype vendor sales. Admission: \$25.00 with pre-registration; \$30.00, at door. Pre-registrants will receive a proprietary decal set of 22 load limit/light weight values, reweigh location/dates, and repack stencils in the railroad's type face. Pre-register with Sunshine Models, Box 4997, Springfield, MO 65808-4997.

**California, Indio** — The Coachella Valley Model Railroaders will be hosting an Open House on March 14th, at the Riverside County Fair National Date Festival Fairgrounds, 82-503 Highway 111. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Attractions will include their fully scenic HO Scale layout with over 2,500 feet of track, and over 500 feet HO N3 layout operating with DCC. Admission is free. Enter at Gate 1 in front of the fairgrounds and follow the signs. For more information, contact: Jim Hundley, (760) 347-6218; e-mail: [jim@cvmr.com](mailto:jim@cvmr.com); visit: [www.cvmr.com](http://www.cvmr.com)

**California, Livermore** — Sunshine Models' Prototype Modelers Meet will be held on March 15th, at La Quinta Inn, located on I-580 at Greenville Road exit. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Meet to feature five nationally noted speakers on historical and modeling subjects. Admission: \$25.00 with pre-registration; \$30.00, at door. Pre-registrants will receive a proprietary decal set of 22 load limit/light weight values, reweigh location/dates, and repack stencils in the railroad's type face. Pre-register with Sunshine Models, Box 4997, Springfield, MO 65808-4997.

**California, Los Angeles, (Hawthorne)** — The Los Angeles Model Railroad Society will be holding Open House on April 4-5th, at 14005 S. Crenshaw Blvd. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. both days. Their 2,000 square foot HO standard and narrow gauge layout features DCC control. You are welcome to run one of their trains for 30 minutes for \$10.00. Admission is free. For more information, call: (310) 675-3361 (please leave a phone number slowly); e-mail: [info.lamrs@verizon.net](mailto:info.lamrs@verizon.net); or visit: [www.lamrs.org](http://www.lamrs.org)

**California, Simi Valley** — The Santa Susana Railroad Historical Society Swap Meet and Open House will be held on March 28th, at 6503 Katherine Road. Hours will be from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. Attractions to include all scales, scenery, books, photos, plus a vintage diesel horn demonstration. Admission: \$2.00 donation, adults; children admitted free. For more information, contact: Bernie, (805) 526-0371; e-mail: [events@santasusannadept.org](mailto:events@santasusannadept.org); or visit: [www.santasusannadept.org](http://www.santasusannadept.org)

**Colorado, Lakewood** — The Foothills Society of Model Railroaders' Model Railroad and Toy Train Swap Meet will be held on March 21st, at Christ on the Mountain Church, 13922 W. Utah Avenue. Meet hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Admission: \$3.00, adults; \$1.50, over 64 or under 12. For more information, call George, (303) 989-0087; or Eric, (303) 985-1491.

**Connecticut, Willimantic** — The Connecticut Eastern Railroad Museum will be sponsoring a Model Train and Die Cast Show on March 29th, at Windham High School, 355 High Street. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Attractions to include operating layouts, vendors, a door prize, and refreshments on site, which is handicapped accessible with wide aisles. Parking is free. Admission by donation: \$6.00, adults; \$1.00, children 8-12; under 8 admitted free. For more information, call: Joseph Sokol, (860) 872-2240; or e-mail: [joseph\\_sokol@msn.com](mailto:joseph_sokol@msn.com)

**Florida, Pinellas Park** — H&R Trains will be sponsoring their 56th Train Show on March 27-29th, at H&R Trains, 6901 U.S. Highway 19 N. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Friday and Saturday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attractions to include a layout competition, exhibits of every scale, how-to classes, seminars, demonstrations, and door prizes. Admission is free. For more information, contact: David Beiter or Alice Morris, H&R Trains, 6901 U.S. Hwy. 19 N, Pinellas Park, FL 33781; (727) 526-4682; fax: (727) 526-3439; e-mail: [hrrtrains@hrrtrains.com](mailto:hrrtrains@hrrtrains.com); [www.hrrtrains.com](http://www.hrrtrains.com)

**Florida, Plant City** — The H.B. Plant Railroad Historical Society will be holding a Train Show and Swap Meet on March 21st, at the John Trinkle Building on the Hillsborough Community College Plant City Campus, 1206 N. Park Road. Show hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Admission: \$6.00, adults; children under 17 admitted free with adult admission. For more information, contact: Gilbert Thomas, Jr., 4840 Williamstown Blvd., Lakeland, FL 33810; (863) 412-3090; e-mail: [Thomas\\_12399@msn.com](mailto:Thomas_12399@msn.com); [www.hbplantnrr.org](http://www.hbplantnrr.org)

**Florida, Port Richey** — Regal Railways will be sponsoring a Train Show on March 28th, at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 5850 K of C Drive. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Attractions to include vendors selling items, and different train displays. Admission: \$4.00, adults; children under 13 admitted free. For more information, contact: Joe Schramm, 1424 Regal Road, Clearwater, FL 33756; (727) 244-1341.

**Illinois, Arlington Heights** — The Chicago O Scale Meet will be held March 20-22, at the Sheraton Chicago Northwest Hotel, 3400 West Euclid Avenue. Show hours for the public will be from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attractions will include the opportunity to buy, sell, and trade; clinics, discussion groups, layout tours, and a model contest. Admission: \$20.00 for the weekend. For more information, call: Judy, (847) 401-4333; or visit: [www.marchmeet.net](http://www.marchmeet.net)

**Illinois, Rockford** — The Rock River Valley Division, Midwest Region of the NMRA will be holding their 18th annual Show & Sale on March 28-29th, at Jefferson High School, 4145 Samuelson Road. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attractions to include vendors, displays, demonstrations, operating layouts, and door prizes. Free parking and refreshments will be available. Admission: \$5.00 donation, adults; children under 12 accompanied by an adult and Scouts in uniform admitted free. For more information, contact: Jim Studer, 1024 Jamestown Drive, Rockford, IL 61109; e-mail: [imuprills@aol.com](mailto:imuprills@aol.com)

**Illinois, Wheaton** — The Great Midwest Train Show will be held on March 8th, at the DuPage County Fairgrounds, 2015 W. Manchester Road. Show hours will be from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Admission: \$7.00, adults; children under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Great Midwest Train Show, P.O. Box 34, Elmhurst, IL 60126; (630) 290-1962; fax: (240) 597-4482; [www.greatmidwesttrainshow.com](http://www.greatmidwesttrainshow.com)

**Indiana, Crown Point** — The Crown Point Model Railroad Show and Swap Meet will be held on March 29th, at St. Matthias Church Hall, 101 Burrell Drive. Hours will be from 10:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Admission: \$3.00, adults; \$1.00, children. For more information, call Tom, (219) 663-4480; or Bruno, (219) 663-0666.

**Indiana, Indianapolis** — The Naptown and White River Model Railroad Club will be presenting a Model Railroad Train Show and Open House on March 7th, at the Manual High School Gymnasium, 2405 S. Madison Avenue. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Admission: \$5.00, adults; children under 6 admitted free. Attractions to include operating layouts, clinics, and tours of the Club's Clubhouse, a mile from the show. For more information, call: Steve Handly, Club President, (317) 786-8627; or visit: [www.naptownrr.org](http://www.naptownrr.org)

**Indiana, Nappanee** — The Elkhart Model Railroad Club will be having their Annual Show and Sale on March 14th, at Borkholder Dutch Village, located 1/2 mile north of U.S. Highway 6 on Tomahawk Trail (CR 101). Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Attractions to include operating layouts, video presentations, door prizes, and railroad products in all scales. Admission: \$4.00, adults; 12 and under admitted free with paid adult admission. For more information, contact: Paul Ewing, (574) 287-0908; e-mail: [emrcc@yahoo.com](mailto:emrcc@yahoo.com); or visit the club web site at: [www.trainweb.org/ew](http://www.trainweb.org/ew)

**Indiana, South Bend** — Saint Joe Valley Model Railroad Club's Show and Sale will be held on March 15th, at South Bend Elks Lodge, 3535 E. McKinley Avenue. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Attractions to include operating layouts, including LEGO model railroad, seminars, and refreshments on site. Admission: \$4.00, individuals; \$8.00, family. For more information, contact: Mr. David Korkhouse, P.O. Box 6591, South Bend, IN 46660; (574) 272-6436; [www.sjvrr.com](http://www.sjvrr.com)

**Iowa, Ottumwa** — The Great River Railway Club will be holding their annual Railroad Fair Weekend March 7-8, at the Quincy Place Plaza Mall, located at the intersection of Highway 34 and Quincy Avenue. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 12:00 noon to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday. Admission is free. For more information, contact: Tom Morgan, 2075 235th St., Mount Pleasant, IA 52641; (319) 931-3034; e-mail: [psmorgan@iowatelecom.net](mailto:psmorgan@iowatelecom.net)

**Kentucky, Greenup (Argillite)** — The Collis P. Huntington Chapter NRHS will be holding their 26th Annual Tri-State Railroad Days on March 21-22, at Kentucky Park's Greenbo Lake State Resort Park, just off of Kentucky Route 1 (near I-64). Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attractions will include a minimum of 8 operating layouts of more than 1700 sq. ft., 75 dealer tables, day-long showing of railroad videos, a 7-1/2 inch gauge live steam, and a diesel railroad offering free rides to kids of all ages. A full-service restaurant and a snack wagon will be available. Admission and parking are free; donations greatly appreciated. For more information, contact: Dale Smith, 2302 N. Second St., Ironton, OH 45638; (740) 532-6102; e-mail: [conan56@sbcglobal.net](mailto:conan56@sbcglobal.net)

**Maryland, Arcadia** — The Maryland Steam Historical Society's Third Annual Train Show will be held on March 7th, on the show grounds of the Arcadia Fire Company. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Admission: \$3.00, adults; children under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: (410) 374-1332; or visit: [www.marylandsteam.org](http://www.marylandsteam.org)

**Maryland, Timonium** — The "Great Scale Model Train Show" plus the "Hi-Rail & Collectors Train Show" will be held April 4-5th, at the Maryland State Fairgrounds, 2200 York Road. Show hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attractions will include 25,000 square feet of beautifully detailed display layouts in all scales; free train movies; clinics and demonstrations; and over 800 tables of model trains, equipment, and related items for sale. Refreshments will be available; parking is free. Admission: \$9.00, adults; children under 15 admitted free; \$18.00, family. Good for both days. For more information, contact: Howard Zane, 5236 Thunder Hill Road, Columbia, MD 21045; (410) 730-1036; e-mail: [hazane1@comcast.net](mailto:hazane1@comcast.net); [www.gsmts.com](http://www.gsmts.com)

**Massachusetts, Hingham** — The South Shore Model Railway Club's Spring Open House and Show will be held March 21-22, at Bare Cove Park, Building 51, located at 19 Fort Hill Street. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. Saturday attractions to include viewing the club layout, how-to clinics, rail movies, and dealer tables. The activities at the Train Club will also be held on Sunday in conjunction with the new dealers and additional train layouts located at the South Shore Country Club that are visiting on Sunday only. Food service will be available both days from 11:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Country Club. Admission: \$5.00, adults; \$2.00, seniors (65+) and children 6-12 with an adult; children 5 and under admitted free. For more information, contact: The South Shore Model Railway Club, P.O. Box 170, Hingham, MA 02043-0170; (781) 740-2000; fax: (781) 740-8900; e-mail: [ssmrc@verizon.net](mailto:ssmrc@verizon.net); visit: [www.ssmrc.org](http://www.ssmrc.org)

**Massachusetts, Mansfield** — Mystic Valley Railway Society's "Rail-A-Rama XLI" will be held on March 1st, at the Holiday Inn-Mansfield, 31 Hampshire Street, near the intersection of 95 and 495. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Attractions will include many operating displays, children's U-RUN toy trains, a multi-tier video theatre, and free parking. A complete snack bar or Sunday Brunch will be available. Admission: \$5.00, adults;



## EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

\$1.00, children 5-12; under 5 admitted free. For more information, contact: Russ Ryko, P.O. Box 365486, Hyde Park, MA 02136; (617) 361-4445; [www.mysticvalleys.org](http://www.mysticvalleys.org)

**Massachusetts, Shirley** — The Nashua Valley Railroad Association's 44th Annual Railroad Show & Open House will be held March 29th, at each of the following locations: Railfair 2009: Shirley Middle School, 1 Hospital Road. Open House: NVRRA Club Quarters, 2 Shaker Road Unit E-205. Both locations are a short walk from the Shirley MBTA Commuter Rail stop. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Attractions to include the Club layout, live trains, dealers, displays, exhibits, and clinics. Admission: \$5.00, adults; \$3.00, seniors and teens; under 12 admitted free. For more information, e-mail: [Showchair@nvrra.com](mailto:Showchair@nvrra.com); or visit: [www.nvrra.com](http://www.nvrra.com)

**Massachusetts, Taunton** — The NMRA HUB Division will be holding its Spring Training event on March 7th, at the Holiday Inn, 700 Myles Standish Boulevard. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Admission: \$5.00, adults; under 14 admitted free. Attractions to include clinics, dealer tables, and layouts. Featured clinician will be Allan McClelland. For more information, contact: Peter Watson, (508) 378-3582; e-mail: [Springtraining@hubdiv.org](mailto:Springtraining@hubdiv.org)

**Massachusetts, Wilmington** — A Greenberg Train & Toy Show will be held March 28-29, at Shriners Auditorium, 99 Fordham Road. Show hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. both days. Show will feature a huge marketplace of train, toy, and hobby dealers, operating model railroads, and instructional presentations. Admission: \$7.00, adults good for both days; children under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Greenberg Shows, P.O. Box 34, Elmhurst, IL 60126; (630) 279-4087; e-mail: [Staff@Greenbergshows.com](mailto:Staff@Greenbergshows.com); [www.greenbergshows.com](http://www.greenbergshows.com)

**Michigan, Mount Pleasant** — Dog Tales (therapy dogs reading with kids) and Clare Depot Preservation will be sponsoring a Model Train Show and Flea Market on March 29th, at Finch Fieldhouse, located on the campus of Central Michigan University. Hours will be from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Attractions to include a large one room location with free parking, operating layouts, and food concessions. Admission: \$4.00, adults; children under 10 admitted free. Funds raised will enable sponsors to purchase books and supplies, and to work on the preservation and running of part of the depot, once preserved. For more information, call Lewis, (989) 386-6987.

**Minnesota, Hutchinson** — Luce Line Railroad Club will be hosting their Spring Railfest on March 28th, at the Hutchinson Mall, 1060 State Hwy. 15 S. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Attractions to include operating model railroads in several scales, a flea market of new and used model railroad equipment, railroad books, videos, and memorabilia; and lunch on site. Admission is free. For more information, contact: Terry Davis, (320) 587-7820; e-mail: [ptdavis@hutchtel.net](mailto:ptdavis@hutchtel.net)

**Missouri, Joplin** — The Joplin Museum Complex will be hosting a Model Railroad Show and Swap Meet on March 28th, at 7th and Schifferdecker Streets in Schifferdecker Park between the golf course and swimming pool. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Attractions to include several operating train layouts, over 60 tables of items for sale or trade from scale model trains, collectible antique electric trains, and train collectibles. Admission: \$3.00, adults; 12 and under admitted free. All proceeds at the door go to benefit the Joplin Museum Complex. For more information, contact: Rick Gardner, (417) 673-4888; e-mail: [rickgardner@sfnsoft.com](mailto:rickgardner@sfnsoft.com); or visit: [www.tristatemodelrailroaders.com](http://www.tristatemodelrailroaders.com)

**Missouri, Saint Louis** — The Boeing Employees' Railroad Club will be having a Railroad Swap Meet on March 14th, at the Greensfelder Recreation Complex, located at Queeny Park, 550 Wiedman Road. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Admission: \$3.00, adults; children under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Wayne Schimmel, 733 Hwy. Y, Winfield, MO 63389; (636) 668-6313 after 6:30 p.m. CT; e-mail: [wwhtehse@aol.com](mailto:wwhtehse@aol.com)

**New Jersey, Edison** — A Greenberg Train & Toy Show will be held March 14-15, at the New Jersey Convention & Expo Center, 97 Sunfield Avenue. Show hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. both days. Show will feature a huge marketplace of train, toy, and hobby dealers, operating model railroads, and instructional presentations. Admission: \$7.00, adults good for both days; children under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Greenberg Shows, P.O. Box 34, Elmhurst, IL 60126; (630) 279-4087; e-mail: [Staff@Greenbergshows.com](mailto:Staff@Greenbergshows.com); [www.greenbergshows.com](http://www.greenbergshows.com)

**New York, Hornell** — The Hornell Model Railroad Club will be holding its Annual Show and Open House on February 7-8, in the Hornell, NY Courthouse basement (next to Friendly's Restaurant). Hours will be from 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. both days. Admission is free. For more information, call Louis K. Greiff, (607) 587-8372; or e-mail: [louie113@frontiernet.net](mailto:louie113@frontiernet.net)

**New York, Massapequa Park, L.I.** — The Sunrise Trail Division, NER, NMRA will be holding their Spring Meet on April 11th, at

Saint David's Lutheran Church, 20 Clark Blvd. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Attractions to include modeling clinics, a model contest, NMRA Merit Award judging, a white elephant table, and swearing in of new officers and directors. Admission: \$2.00, NMRA/STD members; \$3.00, others. For more information, contact: John Mac Gown, 32 Liberty Blvd., Valley Stream, NY 11580; (516) 285-0876; e-mail: [burljohn@verizon.net](mailto:burljohn@verizon.net)

**North Carolina, Greensboro** — The Carolina Model Railroaders will be holding a Train Show and Swap Meet on March 14th, at the J. Douglas Galyon Depot (formerly southern Railway Station), 236-C East Washington Street. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Attractions to include dealers, and the Club's operating N scale layout, and HO layout (under construction). Admission: \$5.00, adults; children under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Bob Love, 5926 Firewood Trail, Greensboro, NC 27410; (336) 665-1517; e-mail: [Boblove1@bellsouth.net](mailto:Boblove1@bellsouth.net) or Ben Stemkowski, (336) 540-1543; e-mail: [stemjobe@bellsouth.net](mailto:stemjobe@bellsouth.net)

**Ohio, Cleveland** — The World's Greatest Hobby On Tour will be held March 14-15, at the IX Center. Show hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attractions will include entertainment, operation model layouts, manufacturers, and hobby shops. Admission: \$10.00, adults; children under 16 admitted free; admission is good for both days. For more information, contact: World's Greatest Hobby On Tour, P.O. Box 11, Elmhurst, IL 60126; (630) 279-5094; fax: (630) 214-4113; [www.wghshow.com](http://www.wghshow.com)

**Ohio, Dalton** — CJ Trains' Spring Greater Wayne County Train and Toy Show will be held on March 22nd, at Buckeye Event Center, 624 Henry Street. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Attractions to include all gauges, running layouts, farm and antique toys, NASCAR items, videos, free parking, and refreshments will be available. Admission: \$4.00, adults; children 12 and under admitted free. For more information, contact: Jon Ulbright, 941 Buchholz Drive, Wooster, OH 44691; (330) 262-7488 after 6:00 p.m.; e-mail: [cathijon@sssn.net](mailto:cathijon@sssn.net); [www.cjtrains.com](http://www.cjtrains.com)

**Ohio, Greenville** — The Darke Co. Model Railroad Club Flea Market will be held on March 1st, in the Youth Building at the Darke Co. Fairgrounds, located on State Route 49. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Admission: \$3.00, adults; under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Sam Bashore, 528 Wayne Ave., Greenville, OH 45331; (937) 548-0059.

**Ohio, Olmsted Falls** — The Cuyahoga Valley & West Shore Model Railroad Club's Annual Spring Open House will be held April 18-19th, at the Olmsted Falls Depot, 25802 Garfield Boulevard. Hours will be from 12:00 noon to 5:00 p.m. Attractions to include Lionel, HO-, and N-scale layouts. Admission: \$2.00, adults; children admitted free. For more information, contact: Bill Cramer, (440) 572-3714; e-mail: [wmhcramer@yahoo.com](mailto:wmhcramer@yahoo.com)

**Oregon, Clackamas** — The 24th Annual Willamette Model Railroad Club Swap Meet will be held on March 7th, at New Hope Church, 11731 SE Stevens Road. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Attractions to include over 100 tables of sellers of all gauges, books, tapes, memorabilia, and accessories. Refreshments will be available on premises. Admission: \$3.00, adults; children under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Rick Andrews, (503) 642-3298; e-mail: [drdwes1@verizon.net](mailto:drdwes1@verizon.net)

**Pennsylvania, Fenton** — The Maryland Steam Historical Society's Third Annual Train Show will be held on March 7th, on the show grounds of the Arcadia Fire Company. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Admission: \$3.00, adults; children under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: (410) 374-1332; or visit: [www.marylandsteam.org](http://www.marylandsteam.org)

**Pennsylvania, Greensburg** — Division 2, MCR-NMRA will be sponsoring Railroad Prototype Modelers Seminar — East on March 27-28, at the Sheraton Four Points Hotel, located on Route 30 East. Hours will be from 1:00 p.m. on Friday to 11:00 p.m. on Saturday. Registration will begin at 10:00 a.m. on Friday. For more information, contact: Dick Flock, 337 Elm Drive, Greensburg, PA 15601; (724) 850-8882; e-mail: [jlerr337@verizon.net](mailto:jlerr337@verizon.net); [www.greensburgpa4points.com](http://www.greensburgpa4points.com)

**Pennsylvania, Grove City** — NMRA MRC Division 11's Second Annual Train Show and Jamboree will be held on April 4th, at Grove City Masonic Lodge, 1340 W. Main Street. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Attractions to include how-to clinics, train displays, videos, a flea market, and a white elephant table. Admission: \$5.00, adults; children 12 and under admitted free. For more information, contact: Robert Hartle, 851 Reed Rd., Clarion, PA 16214; (814) 223-9699; e-mail: [cmrproducts@yahoo.com](mailto:cmrproducts@yahoo.com)

**Pennsylvania, Pittsburgh (Moon Township)** — Division Two of the NMRA's Mid-Central Region will be sponsoring the Pittsburgh Model Railroad Jamboree on March 21st, at the Sewall Center at Robert Morris University Moon Township Campus, 6001 University Blvd. Meet will feature model railroad clinics, contests, displays, door prizes, an after dinner program, and more. Registration is

\$22.00 for NMRA members and includes continental breakfast and buffet lunch; \$32.00 for non-NMRA members; dinner will be \$28.00. For more information, call (412) 276-6006; e-mail: [ctylss@aol.com](mailto:ctylss@aol.com); or visit: [www.keystonedivision.org](http://www.keystonedivision.org)

**Texas, Longview** — The Junction and East Texas Train Society (JETTS) will be sponsoring the Longview Model Train Show on March 28-29th, at the Fairgrounds Exhibit Building, located off Highway 31 on Jaycee Drive. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attractions will include modular layouts, dealer displays, a flea market, and videos. Admission: \$7.00, adults; children under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Homer Fleischer, J.E.T.T.S., P.O. Box 6704, Longview, TX 75608; (903) 753-9512.

**Utah, Ogden** — The Hostlers 20th Annual Model Railroad Festival will be held March 6-8, at the Ogden Union Station, located at 25th Street and Wall Avenue. Hours will be from 4:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Friday; from 9:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. Admission: \$5.00, adults; children 12 and under admitted free. For more information, contact: Mike Murphy, (801) 394-4952; or John Grubb, (801) 476-9351; or visit: [www.hostlers.info](http://www.hostlers.info)

**Vermont, Essex Junction** — The Northwestern Vermont Model Railroad Association will be hosting Vermont's largest Model Train Show on March 21st, at the Champlain Valley Exposition. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The show will be featuring multiple operating HO, N, G, and O-scale layouts, over 120 tables of exhibits and vendors, and a raffle. Site has free parking, and refreshments will be available at site. Admission: \$5.00, adults; \$1.00, ages 6-12; under 6 admitted free. For more information, contact: Ron Piro, 6 Peacham Ln., Essex Junction, VT 05452; (802) 878-1135; e-mail: [ronpiro@aol.com](mailto:ronpiro@aol.com); [www.nvrrailroad.org](http://www.nvrrailroad.org)

**Virginia, Fredericksburg** — A Greenberg Train & Toy Show will be held March 21-22, at Fredericksburg Expo & Conference Center, 2371 Carl D. Silver Parkway. Show hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. both days. Show will feature a huge marketplace of train, toy, and hobby dealers, operating model railroads, and instructional presentations. Admission: \$7.00, adults good for both days; children under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Greenberg Shows, P.O. Box 34, Elmhurst, IL 60126; (630) 279-4087; e-mail: [Staff@Greenbergshows.com](mailto:Staff@Greenbergshows.com); [www.greenbergshows.com](http://www.greenbergshows.com)

**Virginia, Virginia Beach** — A Greenberg Train & Toy Show will be held February 28-March 1, at Virginia Beach Convention Center, 1000 19th Street. Show hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. both days. Show will feature a huge marketplace of train, toy, and hobby dealers, operating model railroads, and instructional presentations. Admission: \$7.00, adults good for both days; children under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Greenberg Shows, P.O. Box 34, Elmhurst, IL 60126; (630) 279-4087; e-mail: [Staff@Greenbergshows.com](mailto:Staff@Greenbergshows.com); [www.greenbergshows.com](http://www.greenbergshows.com)

**Wisconsin, Green Bay** — N.E.W. Hobby's 23rd Annual Toy and Train Show will be held on March 1st, at Van Veghels Auction Complex, 2050 Profit Place. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Attractions to include old, and new collectible toys and trains of all scales. Refreshments will be available. For more information, call Jack Bacovsky, (920) 494-2216.

**Wisconsin, Appleton** — The Paper Valley Model Railroad Club will be hosting their annual Spring Swap Meet on March 14th, at the National Guard Armory, 2801 West Second Street. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Refreshments will be available. Admission: \$2.00, adults; \$1.00, ages 8 to 16; \$5.00, family maximum. For more information, contact: Jim Leschke, 2608 S. Harmon St., Appleton, WI 54915; (920) 734-9290.

**Wisconsin, Madison** — The NMRA, Midwest Region, South Central Wisconsin Division will be holding their Monthly Meeting on April 5th, at Fitchburg Community Center, 5510 Lacy Road (1/4 mile east of Fish Hatchery Road). Meeting will begin at 1:00 p.m. Program to include live clinics, model and photo contests, door prizes, and home layout viewing. Admission is free. For more information, contact: Radleigh Becker, (608) 231-1817; e-mail: [rbecker@merr.com](mailto:rbecker@merr.com); [www.nmra-scwd.org](http://www.nmra-scwd.org)

## CANADA

**Canada, Alberta, Calgary** — Calgary Model Railway Society will be presenting SUPERTRAIN 2009, on April 18-19th, at Calgary Soccer Centre, 7000 48th Street SE. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. both days. Show to feature over 60,000 square feet of operating model railroad layouts, displays, Lionel, Lego trains, Thomas and Friends, Garden Railways, photo exhibits, merchandise for sale, live demos and clinics, and a children's play area. Admission: \$10.00, adults; \$5.00, children 6-12; children under 6 admitted free. \$1.00 off admission with donation of non-perishable food item to Calgary Food Bank. Parking is free. For more information, e-mail: [info@supertrain.ca](mailto:info@supertrain.ca); or visit: [www.supertrain.ca](http://www.supertrain.ca)



**As a courtesy to our readers, we have compiled an index featuring every product reviewed in the pages of MRN over the past year. We hope you find it useful.**

## February 2009

Project DCC, Part 7B Signal System Wiring  
Aristo-Craft (DVD) *How Model Trains Are Made*  
Atlas O (O) MP15 Locomotive  
Bachmann (1:20.3) Davenport Critter Mechanical Locomotive  
Broadway Limited C30-7  
Digitrax (Z, N & HO) DZ125 Decoder  
Kato (N) Southern Pacific PA-1 & PB-1 Diesel Locomotives  
Lenz (DCC) Lenz Set-100 Starter Set Upgrade  
Matysik Display Shelf (Multi Scale) Display Shelves  
Old and Weary (HO) Tappan Station  
Piko (1:22.5) Taurus Locomotive  
Seivers Benchwork (ALL) Benchwork Section Kits  
Walthers (HO) H-10-44 Diesel Loco & Everett Street Station

## January 2009

Project DCC, Part 7A Signal System Wiring  
Special Report: Kader Buys Sada Kan  
Atheam (N) F45/FP45 Diesel Locomotive & (HO) Checker Cab  
Fallen (N) Animated Car System  
Grand River Models (S) Greg's Grocery Kit  
MRC (DCC) 1820 Sound Decoder for Atheam RS3 Locomotive  
MTH (HO) NYC 4-8-2 *Mohawk* & (O) CA-1 Caboose  
Signature Press (Book) *Southern Pacific Freight Cars, Vol 5*  
Walthers (HO) *Hiawatha* Diner and Tap Lounge & RS-2/RSC-2

## December 2008

Aristo-Craft (1:29) 40-Foot Boxcars  
Atheam (N) Ford C Rescue Trucks, (HO) CSX & Santa Fe Train Sets, (HO) F-7A/B Diesel Locomotive  
Atlas (N) Trainman Train Set  
Atlas O (O) Industrial Rail Starter Set  
Bachmann (Track) E-Z Command DCC Turnouts  
Blair Lines (HO) *Pizzaland* Kit  
MTH (HO) Railking Scale Diesel Starter Set  
Steamscenics (Calendars) 2009 Railroad Themed Calendars  
Piko (HO) ICE-3 Train Set  
Tokyo Marui (Z) Night Train Set

## November 2008

Project DC, Part 6: Turnout Control Wiring  
Atheam, Kato & Walthers (HO) Intermodal Cars  
Atlas O (O) Master Line, Train Man & Industrial Rail Freight Car Roundup  
Bachmann (Fn3) Boxcar

Charles Smiley (Video) *Key System Scrapbook*  
Con-Cor (HO) Union Pacific M-10000  
GC Laser (N & HO) Utility Truck Toolbox Kit  
Granite Creek (On3) Logging Cars  
Noch (HO) Shed/Kiosk Kit  
Pine Canyon (S0) Professional Building Kit  
Preiser (HO) Vegetable Wagon  
Smoky Mountain (S) 41-foot Flat Car Kit  
Train Control System (DCC & N) Decoder for "Classic N" Locomotives

## October 2008

Special Coverage: MTH/MKT Trade Secret Lawsuit Settled  
Project DCC Part 5: Track Assembly, Wiring, & Block Detection  
Atlas (N) C420 Diesel Locomotive  
Bachmann (HO) Peter Witt-Style Street Car  
BVRR Specialties (Tool) Maxi-Grip Screw Starter  
Grizzly Mountain Engineering (O) Farmers & Freight Wagons  
Kadee (HO) Cushion Underframe Boxcars  
Kato (N) Gunderson MAXI-IV Well Cars  
Lionel (O) Legacy-Equipped FEF-3 Steam Locomotive  
NCE (Electronics) DCC Wireless System  
NSLC (Tool) Flamingo Glue  
Oak Tree Systems (Electronics) SC-2 Servo Controller  
Preiser (O) American Railroad Figures  
Ye Olde Huff N Puff (On30) Freight Car Kits

## September 2008

Special Coverage: NMRA 2008 National Train Show  
Project DCC Part 4: Layout Configuration  
Banta/Bachmann (On30) Boxcar Body Conversion Kit  
Factory Direct Trains (HO) Trackmobile  
Golden West Books (Book) *West Coast Interurbans-California*  
Lionel (O) Legacy 990 Command Control System  
MTH (HO) GS4 4-8-4 *Daylight* (O) Railking SW1 Diesel Locomotive  
Red Caboose (HO) S-40-5 Stock Cars  
Smokey Mountain Model Works (S) Ventilated Boxcars  
Tomix (N) Freight and Fire Trucks  
Wheels of Time (N) Harriman Passenger Cars  
Woodland Scenics (O) Scenic Accent Figures

## August 2008

Project DCC Part 3: DCC System Familiarization  
Allen Keller (DVD) *Great Model Trains Vol. 58*  
Aristo-Craft (1:24) C-16 Steam Locomotive  
Bachmann (All Scales) DCC Control System, (Fn3) Tank Cars  
Brass Trains (Book) *Brass Model Trains Price & Data Guide Vol. 1*  
Broadway Limited (HO) Union Pacific Big Boy Steam Locomotive  
Intermountain (N) SD45-2 Diesel Locomotive and

Wood Deck Flat Car  
Kato (N) Daylight Northern 4-8-4 GS 4 Steam Locomotive Set  
MTH (O) 19th Century Wood Coaches  
Sidetrack Laser (HO) Cougar Ridge Lumber Co.  
Siflor (All Scales) Landscaping Material  
Walthers (HO) Proto 2000 Early EMD Road Switchers

## July 2008

Special Coverage: How to Modify Your Old Roundhouse Box Cab  
Project DCC Part 2  
Atheam (HO) SD40-T Tunnel Motors  
Bachmann (On30) Baldwin 4-4-0 American Steam Locomotive  
Brass Guide (Book) *Brass Train Guide Book*  
First Gear International (HO & O) TD25 Crawler ESU/Loksound (All Scales) Sound Decoder with Railmaster Hobbies Ported Speakers  
ICOM (N) TMC400 Motorcar, Park Set, Park Institution, and Bulldozer  
Micro-Trains (N) 40-Foot Drop Bottom Gondola with Woodchip Extension  
River Point Station (HO) F-350 Duallies  
USA Trains (1:29) Fairmont Speeders

## June 2008

Nuremberg International Toy Fair 2008  
Project DCC Part 1  
Aristo-Craft (1:29) Live Steam 2-8-2 Mikado Steam Locomotive  
Atheam (HO) F-850 Flat Bed MOW Trucks  
Atlas Trainman (N) Thrall 4759 Covered Hopper and Master Line (N) ACF 5701  
Centerflow Plastics Hopper  
Blair Line (HO) Gerald Depot Laser-Cut Kit  
Broadway Limited (HO) BlueLine RSD-14 "Alligator" Diesel Locomotive  
Busch (HO) Summer Cottage Built-Up Structure  
Castline (S) Auto-Thentic Pontiac Star Chief, Ford Crestliner & Mercury Sun Valley Autos  
Charles Smiley (DVD) *Union Pacific Scrapbook*  
Great Northern Book Publishing (BOOK) *BNSF Railway Freight Cars Vol 2*  
Marklin (Z) Commodore J1e Hudson Locomotive  
Tangent Scale Models (HO) PS-2CD Hoppers  
Walthers (N) Proto N GP18 Diesel Locomotive  
Weaver Models (O) Head End RPO and Baggage Cars  
Western Scale Models Blacksmith Shoppe  
Craftsman-style Structure Kit

## May 2008

Special Report: 1:87 Vehicle Coverage from the 2008 International Toy Fair  
American Ltd. Sand Towers and Fuel Cranes  
Aristo-Craft (Large Scale) Rail Joiners Track Accessory  
Atheam (HO) Genesis EMD MP15AC Switcher  
Standard DC & Sound DC/DCC  
Atlas O (O) EMD F2/F3s 2-Rail and 3-Rail

Bachmann (1:20.3) Side-Door Gondola  
CMW/Walthers (HO) GM PD 4103 Intercity Bus  
Golden West Books (Book) *Piggyback and Containers: A History of Rail Intermodal on America's Steel Highway*  
MNP/Bachmann/NCE (O) DCC-Powered Track Cleaning Car  
Masterpiece (HO) 2007 Jeep Wrangler Unlimited  
Micro-Trains (N) ACF Three Dome Tank Car  
PrairieWorks (DVD) *SOO Line: From Michigan to Montana*  
USA Trains (1:29) "Great Lakes" Ore Cars  
Walthers (N) Cornerstone Injection-Molded Structure Kits, (HO) Hiawatha 52-Seat Coach and Express Car

## April 2008

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Atheam (N) Pre-weathered NACC 50-Foot Boxcars & (HO) John Deere Log Skidder  
Atlas O (O) SD40 *Red Baron* Locomotive & Wood Express Reeder  
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Bar Mills (HO) Tylick Tool Company Kit  
BRAWA (HO) Pin-Socket Street Light  
Blackstone Models (HO) D&RGW 3000 Series Boxcars  
Broadway Limited (HO) Hybrid 4-6-4 New Haven I-5 Hudson  
Charles Smiley (DVD) *Great Shortlines West*  
MTH (HO) 2-8-8-2 Triplex Locomotive  
Masterpiece (HO) 1936 Chrysler Airflow Imperial Eight  
QSI Solutions (1:29) Plug-N-Play Aristo Sound Decoder

## March 2008

Atheam (HO) Maxi I Well Car 5-Car Set with New Tooling  
Atlas (N) ALCO C420 Diesel DC & DCC, (N & HO) 1978 Ford Fairmont Sedans, & (HO) Plastic Truss Bridge Kit  
Bachman (Large Scale 1:20.3) K-27 *Mudhen* & 2-Bay Hopper  
Banta Modelworks (O) Laser-Cut Gas Station Kit  
C. Vision Productions (DVD) *Windy City Rails Vol. 3*  
MTH (O) *RailKing Imperial* USRA 2-8-8-2 Mallet with ProtoSounds 2.0 and DCS Control  
Kato (N) Yard Crew & UNITRAK Super-elevated Track Set  
Sidetrack Laser (HO) Classic Ice House Kit  
Signature Press (Book) *Southern Pacific's Salt Lake Division*  
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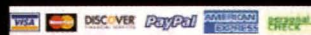
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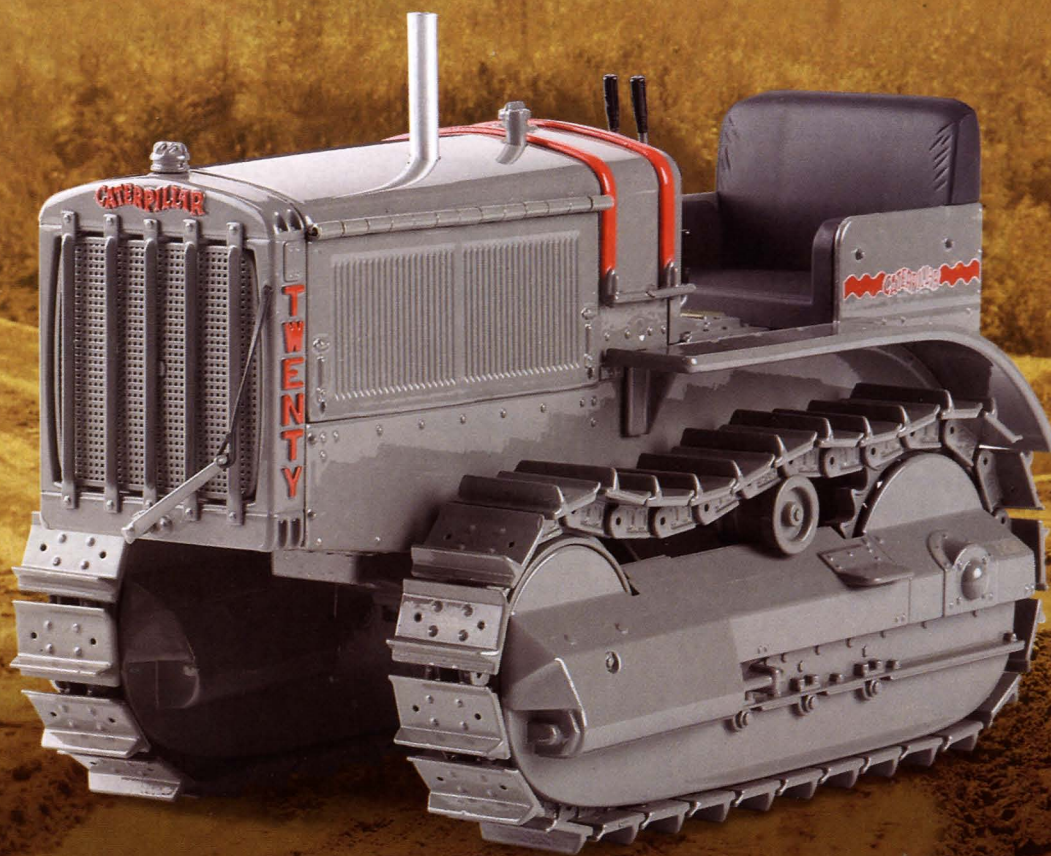
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